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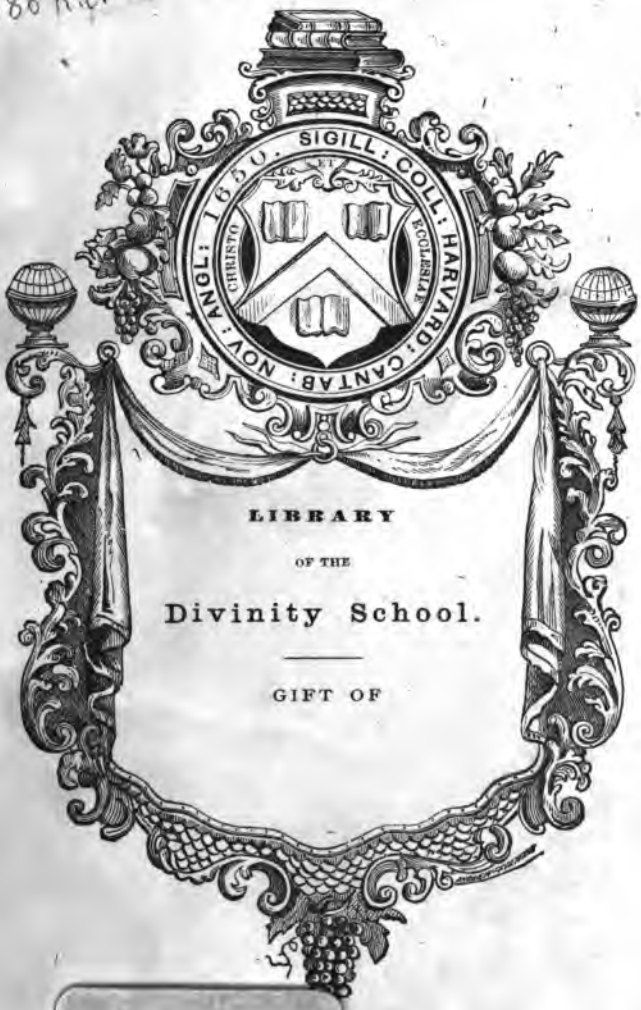

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ALETHEIA;

OR,

LETTERS

ON THE

TRUTH OF CATHOLIC DOCTRINES.

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Charles Constantine Pise D. D.

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ALETHEIA,

BY THE

AUTHOR OF WARIELLA'S CONSTANCY PUBLISHED.

NEW YORK.

PUBLISHED BY EDWARD DUNIGAN,

151 FULTON STREET.

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ALETHEIA;

OR,

LETTERS

ON THE

TRUTH OF CATHOLIC DOCTRINES.

" Rien n'est beau, je reviens, que par la verité :
C'est par elle qu'on plait, et qu'on peut long temps plaire :
L'esprit lasse aisément, si le cœur n'est sincere."

BOILEAU.

" Truth makes the beautiful—I urge again :
Where truth inspires not, every hope were vain
To please ; the mind grows weary, if the heart
Be not sincere."

Et cognoscetis VERITATEM, et VERITAS liberabit vos.—John viii. 32.

And you shall know the TRUTH, and the TRUTH shall make you free.

BY THE

REV. CHARLES CONSTANTINE PISE, D.D.
AUTHOR OF "HISTORY OF THE CHURCH," "FATHER ROWLAND," &c.

NEW-YORK:
PUBLISHED BY EDWARD DUNIGAN,
151 Fulton-Street.
1843.

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Entered according to act of Congress, in the year 1843,

By Edward Dunigan,

in the Clerk's Office, of the Southern District of New-York.

H. LUDWIG, PRINTER,
72 Vesey-st., N. Y.

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To Truth

UNCHANGEABLE, ETERNAL, ALWAYS ANCIENT

AND

ALWAYS NEW.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

The substance of the following letters has already been in print. One small volume, containing about half the work, was published by the Harpers, and the edition has been exhausted. The reader will perceive, that the main study of the author has been to join the *dulce* with the *utile*—the agreeable with the instructive. Controversial books are, generally, not considered very attractive or savoury, by the young and worldly: and, in effect, perhaps it may be acknowledged, that, with the exception of those which have recently been put forth, under the character of "Stories" or "Tales," sufficient attention has not been paid to the garb in which they have been presented to the public. There is a charm in the dress of a book, as well as in the paraphernalia of an individual: not, indeed, of much importance, unless the substance beneath it be intrinsically valuable. But such is the taste of the day—and to it, for the purpose of spreading abroad the tenets of Truth, we must, in some degree, conform. Whatever may be the value of the matter contained in this volume, there can be no question as to the object all parties concerned have had in view—viz. of endeavouring to invite,

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by ingenuous attractions, the attention of the young and gay to the most important study which can occupy their minds. To open the gates, as it were, through these means, to the more sublime and almost boundless fields of religious inquiry and controversial investigation, which expand abroad. Actuated by these intentions, we hope our labour will not be unprofitable. If any expression should have escaped the pen of the author not in perfect accordance with the rigid principles of theology, he would be the first to retract and correct it. His desire is, that what he purposed to himself may be obtained: that the Doctrines of the Church, when viewed by Protestants in their true character, may command their admiration, and that some, at least, who peruse these letters, may be directed to the Sanctuary of TRUTH.

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PREFACE.

THE subjects treated in the following pages will be found highly worthy of a diligent perusal by the candid and inquiring: for, there could not be presented to the public a volume containing more important matter. Without dropping a single expression—certainly without intending to drop a single expression—that might reflect on the sincerity and convictions of others, the Author of this volume stands forth in vindication of the most ancient, and much-injured denomination of Christians. His weapons are not abuse, or unfair representation, or acrimony: they are a candid exposition of certain doctrines which are entirely misunderstood, and an appeal in their behalf, not to the passions, or the prejudices of the heart, but to the sacred tribunal of the Scriptures and Tradition.

The Author's object is to ascertain, whether there are any solid grounds on which the tenets of Catho-

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licity may repose: whether there is any warrant for them in the Bible: whether they were known to the primitive Christians: whether many of them are not admitted by other denominations. He wishes to convince the dispassionate inquirer, that a strict and practical member of the Roman Catholic Church *may* be a genuine friend of Republican Institutions, and *must* be true to his country and his God. His motto is GLORY TO GOD—PEACE TO MEN!

The effect which he would hope to produce, by publishing these letters, is to do away prejudice—to impart information to those who are desirous of acquiring it, concerning our religious tenets: and he conjures the American public to remember, that, among the innumerable writers in favour of our religion, were a Fenelon, a Kempis and other saintly men, whose piety all sects admire, and whose amiable virtues never appeared more beautifully, than when they vindicated the cause of Truth.

Nothing, the public may feel assured, could have induced the Author to publish these letters, but the desire of rectifying certain erroneous ideas which are circu-

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lating through society, regarding the dogmas of the Catholic Church. And it is to be hoped, that one fact will be made certain, viz: that our religion is adapted not merely to the dark ages, but to all times: and that the most enlightened scholar, as well as the poor domestic, may feel proud in belonging to her communion.

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INTRODUCTION.

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INTRODUCTION.

LETTER I.

THE beautiful season of flowers has returned, when all around is fragrance and balm; when Zephyr trims his vernal wings, and the bee goes forth upon his errand of sweetness and honey: and, as the ancient forest tree again begins to put out its earliest verdure inviting to the fresh leaves the birds where they may build their nests, I recline under its shade, and give up my mind to solemn contemplations. I think how many young and blooming beings there are, destined to flourish awhile among the bright and lovely things of earth, and then to be translated into a region of bliss and glory ineffable. Yes, there is in the land of the living, a stream of immortality, on whose banks, such flowers as they are, may bloom and smile in everlasting verdure. But then, mistake not; it is only religion, heaven-born spirit, that can conduct them to that place of rest, that Eden of immortal bliss.

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Oh! there is nothing to compare
With that blest treasure, which I here
Present, amid the flowers of spring,
To thee—a heart-felt offering.

Religion is the wreath
Which my humble muse entwines,
Amid this scene, where every thing combines
To raise the mind to Him who gives us every thing.

Yes, religion is the most important topic that can interest the attention of man; infinitely more important than the great questions of human policy, which awaken the energies of the statesman, and arouse the wisdom of a nation. For, the effects of religion are felt in this world; in all the concerns of society; in all the vicissitudes of life; in all the contingencies of fortune: and they extend, besides, into the grave, beyond the gloom of death, into the very depths of eternity. That which interests the immortal spirit, which will decide its destiny during eternity, is so far above the petty considerations which agitate the world, that no comparison can be drawn between them.

But truth, is an essential attribute of religion; it is impossible that religion could be associated with error, or deception: and consequently it is infinitely necessary, that we endeavour to discover the genuine and original truths of Christianity, amid the doubts and uncertainties which are, every where, found about us.

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Truth, from the bosom of her God
Descends upon the earth,
To guide the wayward to the abode
Of glory, where she took her birth.
Religion's sister! twins of light!
Stars to the heart, in life's dark night!

Where'er they smile, there heaven appears,
Dawning upon these earthly spheres.
Seek, mortal, seek that light divine,
And peace and safety shall be thine.

In retracing all past ages, we discover the interest which this subject has, at all times, excited. We see what talent has been displayed, what industry aroused, what zeal inflamed, in this primal of all concerns. The tears which Jesus shed, were shed for this: the labours which his Apostles underwent, were undergone for this: the torments which the martyrs suffered, were suffered for this. For this Stephen was stoned; Ignatius torn to pieces in the coliseum; Lawrence broiled upon the gridiron.

Yes, when I stood on the arena of that coliseum, the mighty ruins of which still remain in the metropolis of the Christian world, when there, in fancy, I viewed the venerable martyr, heard the roarings of the beasts, the plaudits of the pagan multitude, I said to my heart, behold what heroism has been exerted in the cause of religion! and why are men so reckless, at the present day, about that momentous affair, which cost the primitive Christians so much suffering, and so much blood?

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I know that there are associations without number, in this country, for the propagation of tracts, the diffusion of knowledge, and the spread of the Bible. I am aware of all this; and I do not venture to condemn the intentions of those who form these associations. Their object, perhaps, in substance, is commendable; their zeal praiseworthy: for they tend to confirm the inquirer in this one fact—that they consider the subject of religion as of vital moment, and consequently, that too much pains cannot be taken to urge the subject upon the thoughtless, the lukewarm, the gay; to induce them to pause from the noise of the revel, and turn aside from the pageantry of the festival, and give their minds to serious contemplations. To these I now invite your sacred attention. God bids you devote your susceptibilities to Him, and your heart to his church. For, after all the liberality and charity which should unite man with man, form the bonds of society, and link together the great chain of existence, after all—and deem it not a groundless assertion—truth, like its Author, must be ONE. Oh! start not at the proposition. I do not mean to call in question the sincerity of any *individual* not professing the tenets of the church—I leave all to God. I judge not their hearts, that I may not be judged: but yet, St. Paul, the favourite apostle of every dissenting communion expressly declares, that there is "ONE GOD, ONE FAITH, ONE BAPTISM."

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If this be the case; if amongst the numberless denominations existing, there can be but ONE FAITH, need I repeat, that the investigation into the claims of each particular church, is one of infinite importance. One which God requires—and which reason itself dictates to be indispensably necessary.

Then as the young flowers freshly bloom,
Sending their fragrance to the sky;
Turn, turn to heaven thy grateful eye,
And think,—for it is time to think—
Of those momentous truths which link
The present, with our hopes beyond the tomb.

LETTER II.

True, if the Catholic religion were what the disingenuousness of her adversaries represents her to be, she could not lay claim to any of the prerogatives which should adorn the spouse of the Redeemer. How often have you heard it said, that, even granting there can be but one religion, it manifestly cannot be the Catholic; because it is so corrupt, so full of superstition, so clogged with useless, and idle ceremonies. It is impossible that religion could be the true one, in which the saints are worshipped as gods and goddesses, licenses to commit sin are granted, indulgences are purchased, and casuistry is introduced in lieu of Christian morality.

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This is the language of some of the most distinguished men. You find it in almost every book of travels, every romance, every geography, every history;—from the heavy and elaborated folio down to the flying tract, and simple primer.

Are these charges true? is there any foundation for them in the nature of our holy religion? say not there is: although your education has been of a character to prejudice you against the tenets of catholicism, still there is in your bosom a sentiment of candour, a principle of justice, which forbid you to pronounce judgment before you have heard the real statement of the case.

In these letters, I will examine the question—I will consider what these superstitions are, of which we are accused: whether or not we have any solid grounds on which to base the fabric of our convictions:—and, I am much mistaken, if I cannot make it appear, that we have, at least, as much right to be respected, for our opinions as any of our dissenting citizens have for theirs. And if this be the case, what means the incessant opposition which is encouraged, the warfare which is carried on, against our creed, in a land of universal toleration, liberty, independence!

Why, as before my own dear shrine
I send my prayers to heaven:
Though tapers glimmer while the sun-beams shine,
And the cross tells me of the Lamb divine,
Say, why shall I not be forgiven!

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And yet to be a Catholic appears an irremissible crime. *You* will, I hope, not deem it so, after you shall have had the patience to read these letters, and hear my apology. And it affords me peculiar pleasure, that, retired from the dust of the city, at this beauteous season, and breathing all the freshness of vale and glen, of streamlet and wood, I have leisure to address you on a subject which is very near my heart.

LETTER III.

You remember, one summer morning, as we sat on the portico of your father's mansion, conversing on the subject of religion, that a friend approached, and entering into the conversation, remarked, that the Catholic rests his faith entirely upon tradition. This is not true. We establish our religion upon the principles which Protestantism sanctions: I mean upon the interpretation of the Scriptures, according to the soundest criticism, and on the authority of the unanimous exposition of the primitive commentators.—Yes, the Bible lies before me—it is upon my table; and shall ever be my inseparable companion. Well, how do I act? Do not all denominations admit it to be the source of truth? and is not every individual authorized, by their concession, and with their approbation, to draw from its pellucid

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streams, and drink, that he may thirst not? If then, this privilege be granted to all other men, why, tell me, why am I to be deprived of it? and if I can deduce my doctrines from that inspired volume, why should not my deductions be as sacred and as convincing, as those of the members of any other branches of the Christian community. Do they not allow the Baptist, the Quaker, the Methodist, to rest satisfied in the sincerity of their convictions—then why is the Catholic condemned? why is his church branded with ignominy? why are his tenets identified with the pagan rites of antiquity? why do professors in theological seminaries, "watchmen," and ecclesiastical DOCTORS, seek to sear us with the fiery brand of proscription and disgrace?

And let it not be objected, that our Bibles differ: supposing for a moment, that ours is not the genuine volume, (it will not, however, require much research to prove that it is,) still there is so little discrepancy in the essential parts of each, that I would be willing, in almost all cases, to refer to the Prostestant translation; and with that in my hand, if there be any consistency whatever in the professions of those who send the Bible into every hamlet, I must be permitted, and it will not be difficult, to prove our doctrines from it.

I have, then, on Protestant principles, as much right (to say the least) to be a Catholic, as any other individual has to attach himself to the church of which he is a member. Again, then, I ask, if this be true, what

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means the hostility that has raged and is still raging, against the Catholic religion? What mean those noisy Protestant associations, which, like Thespis of old, move about from corner to corner, from street to treet, systematically misrepresenting, and calumniating our church?

"Dicitur et Thespis vexisse poemata plaustris."

You have learned Latin, and understand well the meaning of this line of Horace. May I paraphrase it?

'Tis said that Thespis used to drive
His cart from door to door,
And standing on his moving stage
To spout his verses o'er.

What mean those *religious* periodicals, the avowed object of which is to oppose the advances of "popery," to disclose its "abominations"—and unceremoniously insult the whole Catholic community? Your benevolent feelings, your kind and general sympathy for all the human race, cause you to revolt from the perusal of such uncharitable effusions—and, of course, you can have no idea of their coarse, malignant, and vituperative spirit.—But there are thousands of others, in every grade of life, who not only peruse them, but believe their assertions as facts, and condemn, as intolerable and anti-christian, the doctrines of our church. They believe that we regard the Pope not merely as a spiritual, but a temporal head—that we cannot, as his subjects, be good

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American citizens—and that we are only waiting the propitious hour to establish his throne upon the ruins of republicanism—and the inquisition on the fragments of our court-houses and legislative halls.

In vain do we repeat, that we admit no authority of a temporal character in the Roman Pontiff—that we acknowledge him only as our chief Bishop residing in the capital of the European world—and that were there question to defend our institutions, or to attach ourselves to his political rule, we should rise *en masse* against his encroachments, and shed our blood in vindication of our rights, and the liberties of American citizens.

But I will appeal not merely to the Bible—though more ought not to be required of me by consistent Protestants. I will array authorities of the most indisputable weight and veracity—I will call up from their silent vaults the fathers of the church—I will question them and the primitive Christians—I will examine the traditions of age after age; the common assent of all believers during a period of fifteen hundred years, and will then appeal to the vast majority of Christians now living, and you will hear the answer: you will judge for yourself, and I will leave you to decide whether there is not a host of authority on which to establish the claims of that religion whose cause I have undertaken to defend.

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LETTER IV.

Oh! when I speak of defending my religion, the hosts of illustrious apologists who have vindicated it so powerfully, ages before we were born, crowd before my imagination. Had I but a single spark of the zeal which enkindled their souls—one solitary emotion of the exalted piety which breathed through their writings, I might hope to produce some effect.

Yet, I will not shrink from an effort: acquainted with many amiable, intelligent, and naturally pious members of society, and knowing the deep prejudices which are fixed in their bosoms against every thing appertaining to our church, I cannot be silent. You yourself, though incapable of entertaining a prejudice against any one, were so educated, that you could not suppress, at times, your wonder that I should be a Catholic. And yet I am, and I glory in the title! a Catholic! yes, but not imbued with the superstitions attributed to the church by the ignorant and unfair. Adhering to the church because she possesses the criterions of truth: because her doctrines are *uniform* —she is ONE: because she has produced myriads of saints—she is HOLY: because she exists in all places—she is CATHOLIC: because she comes down from the era of the apostles—she is APOSTOLIC.

You are not of those, who assert that it is useless and unnecessary to enter into an investigation of reli-

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gious truth. I have heard you declare, that you admit its importance; and, in consequence of your desire to become acquainted with the nature and tenets of our church, I have determined to address you these familiar letters.

Still I have known hundreds who refuse to read, perfectly satisfied, they say, with the religion in which they were born. And, notwithstanding their own security on the subject, many condemn the Unitarian, not reflecting that he acts upon the very same principle—and deems it utterly unimportant to admit the divinity of Christ, because he was born under a different conviction. Yes, I have been amused, when, after hearing this remark, *that no one ought to change his religion*, the question has been put, "Do you think the Unitarian can be saved."

The Jew says that he ought not to forsake the belief of his fathers—the pagan asserts the same. And yet they are both condemned by the very persons who act upon precisely the same maxim, and attempt, in their own regard, to defend it as inviolable. What must you think of such inconsistency?

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LETTER V.

There was a time, when there existed but one only religion. The spectacle then was truly beautiful, of the unanimity and accord of all Christians in believing the same doctrines, practising the same rites, frequenting the same sacraments, and acknowledging the same head. Whatever establishments were erected, whether for literature, or the relief of suffering humanity, all were the offspring of her charity, solicitude, and benevolence. It was a glorious sight to behold an entire nation kneeling at the same altars—its sovereign bending his brow before the tabernacle and the tribunal: the noble, the wise, the learned, the rich, the beautiful, the lovely, all vying in the cause of that one religion.

Then did those monuments arise,
Where talent, wealth, and taste were lavished:
Whose spires in hundreds pierce the skies,
And which, though centuries repose
Upon their hoary casemates—still disclose
Beauties which fill the stranger with surprise,
And skill with which the admiring sight is ravished.

You have seen these prodigious Gothic structures reared under the influence of the Catholic religion, in England and Scotland. Oh! those were halcyon days, indeed: when the quiet of the fireside was not disturbed by polemic disagreements: when all thought alike, acted alike; content in the possession of that

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creed which was transmitted from their forefathers, and happy in the convictions which inspired their minds with security, and their hearts with tranquillity. Those brighter than Astrean days are gone—the noise of controversial disputation is heard in the sanctuary of domestic life, and the recesses of the temples of prayer. Acrimony and prejudice have usurped the tabernacles of ten thousand hearts, where charity and peace and love should ever abide: and we, who still cling to the tenets which rendered our ancestors so happy and so good, are hardly tolerated amid the violence of modern opposition.

In lieu of that one religion which diffused her blessings from pole to pole, there now exists a multitude of others, all of them recent—all of them differing—all of them appealing to the Bible—all of them condemning us.

Before the birth of this numerous offspring of sects, infidelity was unknown. Now, what desolation has not been carried into society by the schools of incredulity which propagate principles the most pernicious to the world and the soul. Schools, which seek to confound spirit with matter—to extinguish the torch of immortal hope—to annihilate our being, in the cold and ignoble dust. Schools which have burst the sinews of order, and deluged society with blood.

Oh! how widely has the spirit of infidelity spread its baneful influence! I have known young, buoyant, feeling hearts—tinctured with the gloom! I have heard lips,

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from which we could have expected no sentiment to fall, but that of piety and devotion, uttering doubts, expressing misgivings—not about purgatory, or the trinity, or transubstantiation, but—the immortality of the soul. To what is the world coming, when such doubts are gaining upon the minds of the fair and feeling? And what barrier can be opposed to such ravages, except that which the authority of our Church can afford. Take away that authority, and the consequence will be fatal to society. It is on account of its having been removed, that every other denomination has undergone change after change; insomuch that, in the language of Starke, "were Luther to rise again, he would not know the church which was the work of his industry." This is the effect of the so much vaunted *private judgment* in matters of religion. What think you of it? So pure a heart as you possess, and so clear a mind as you are adorned with, cannot approve of a principle which has been the parent of so much mischief and so much doubt.

LETTER VI.

I am sitting upon the borders of a limpid brook, under the shade of a venerable sycamore. And while I fix my eye upon its stream which the sun-beams are trying to play on, through the deep foliage of the shrubbery and

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green briar bushes that are entangled along its course, I think of the following touching lines:

Yes, the sun-beam, in tremulous light,
Glimmers soft on the stream as it flows,
Which, shooting its way from the sight,
Mid the shades of the shrubbery goes.

It seems as if longing to hide
All its splendours and charms from the eye,
It steals to the thicket's dark side
And passes in loneliness by.

So virtue, when round her meek head
The halo of glory is bright,
Will fly to some desolate shade,
And hide her from flattery's sight.

Yes, true merit is always most modest—true virtue most retiring. The more we mistrust our own judgments, the more prudence we evince, and the more secure do we repose on the authority of the church of God. And yet the *magna charta* of Protestant liberty is private judgment. What says Archdeacon Blackburn? "When the Protestants first withdrew from the communion of the Church of Rome, the principles they went upon were such as these: Jesus Christ hath, by his gosgel, called all men into liberty—and restored them the privilege of working out their salvation by their *own understandings*." Upon this principle, who could condemn the Socinian or the Unitarian? do they not act according to their understandings? and consequently, do they not act in conformity with the fundamental maxim of the author whose words I have last quoted

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Dr. Marsh maintains the same position. "The church of England," he writes, "recognises to the utmost extent, the right of every man to worship God according to *his own conscience*."

The Doctor might, perhaps, have justly excepted the Catholic: for it would appear, that that right is not extended to one who is made the theme of controversial animadversion, and the object of bigoted vituperation.

The sincere Protestant must feel himself bound, to examine the foundation of his belief. He should put to his reason this question: is it possible that God could have constituted private judgment the rule of religious faith? Who does not know how changeable, how capricious such judgment is? How seldom are two individuals found to agree, in points infinitely less intricate and important, than the sublime subject of divine revelation! Nay, how often does not the same individual change his opinions—destroy at night the work of an entire day: like the daughter of Icarus,

"Nocturno solvens texta diurna dolo."

All day she weaves her subtle work,
But wastes her time in vain:
Her fickle genius, in the night
Undoes the whole again.

I know not how you like the paraphrase, but I am sure you will not imitate the whimsical attribute of Penelope.

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I am aware that it is no easy matter to induce men to undertake an examination into subjects of this kind. Their prejudices, opinions, education, associations, are opposed to every such inquiry. Besides the discovery of truth is not always agreeable: truth is rigid; the duties she prescribes are not congenial to the natural inclinations of the heart—and there are, who, after the light of truth bursts upon them, regret that they had not been left in darkness.

The Redeemer himself complained of the little disposition he found in men to become acquainted with his doctrines. They loved darkness, he said "because their deeds are evil." He proclaimed his Gospel throughout Judea, and after all his exertions, prayers, miracles, he succeeded in associating to himself only twelve followers, and those from the lowest walks of the world.

The eloquence of Paul, who addressed the assembled wisdom of Greece, in the Areopagus of Athens, though he dwelt upon the vital truths of Christianity, and spoke of the most terrific of all subjects—the resurrection of the dead, and the last judgment,—converted but one of the members of that august assemblage.

On another occasion, he could make Felix tremble, and turn pale on his throne, but did not convert him. How then can *I* expect to produce a change, though I prove the necessity of seeking for truth—though I succeed in convincing the unbiassed mind that there exists

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a church, which he who will not hear, "let him be as a heathen and a publican."

This is not my language; strong as it is, remember that it came from the mildest and most amiable of all Beings—from Christ himself. If you discover that church, will you hesitate to listen to her authority? No, you value too highly the privilege of being a Christian.

LETTER VII.

A CHRISTIAN! what a glorious title! the greatest honour which the philosopher can possess, is to be decorated with the name of that divine system which was founded by a crucified Nazarean. It is an honour which we would not forego for worlds. And yet are there existing among us persons illiberal, unjust enough, to make it a matter of disputation whether or not the members of the Catholic Church can claim the dignity of belonging to that system! Alas! What motive can men have in treating the most ancient and venerable church in this perfidious manner. I am astonished how, in this country, at least, such prejudice—might I not rather say ignorance—could be found! In this republic, where learning has erected her shrine, where every facility of acquiring information, and investigating controverted points, may be had—where the spirit

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of inquiry is abroad—where effusions of all descriptions are sent forth in thousands—where periodicals, scientific, literary, critical, and religious, issue from every village; and the streams of information flow, in redundance, over every portion of the country.

But unfortunately, these streams are not pure; their waters are rendered turbid by the intermixture of those running from the fountains of misrepresentation and prejudice. I have said it before—and I cannot repeat the fact too often, the periodicals, especially those purporting to be of a religious character, are stored with false statements, fraught with groundless criminations. The works of fancy are a tissue of ridiculous fabrications, detrimental to our cause; travels are made up of superficial impressions, and even the muse in striking her harp, is made to sing of the "superstitions of popery."

Do I exaggerate? charge me not with giving too deep a dye to the picture. No, some of the most learned men of protestantism have admitted the truth of the sentiment of Dryden:

> A hideous picture of their foes they drew,
> Nor lines, nor looks, nor shades, nor colours true.

I refer you to Mr. Wix, a writer of no ignoble authority in the Church of England: speaking of our religion, "it is," he says, "calumniated cruelly." And Dr. Parr, the rival of Dr. Johnston in gigantic intellect, and powerful reasoning: "It is insulted barbarously."

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Nightingale adds, "No religion is treated so unjustly." And Hume, who viewed the condition of things with a disinterested eye, as all religions to him were objects of illusion and folly, observes: "The Protestants seem to have thought that no truth should be told of Papists." The more you will become acquainted with the real state of the question now before us, the more will you be convinced of the truth and justness of these observations.

I have been acquainted with some very amiable and otherwise enlightened individuals—and have you not met with some—who believed it sinful to read a Catholic book? I have known others, who regarded a priest, as they would a mufti, and felt an indescribable aversion to have any intercourse whatever with him, even in the ordinary relations of society. Nor is it to be wondered at, when the Catholic clergy are branded by their instructors with epithets the most disgraceful, and accused of imposition, jugglery, idolatry, and every abominable practice.

For myself, I have sometimes doubted whether I should be amused, or offended, in reading the descriptions of clerical legerdemain, and sordid profanity, in books from which our Protestant youth derive their hideous notions of Catholicism.

I certainly deem it necessary in self-vindication, and from a motive of social benevolence, to do all that lies in my power to disabuse them of such ridiculous ideas,

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and to represent our tenets as they really are ; and our clergy, in their merited character ;—that of true Christian ministers.

Even the pulpit, the sacred desk itself, is frequently converted into a rostrum for polemical declamation, and ill-natured misrepresentation. Yes, it is too often the case, that the youth of our country, whose minds should be imbued with charity for all mankind, and a respect for the convictions of their fellow-Christians, receive, in the churches which they frequent, impressions of deadly opposition to the Catholics. Is this in conformity with the spirit of true and practical religion ?

Yet, am I far, very far, from implicating all dissenting clergymen in this charge of illiberality. I am acquainted with some, whose virtues are an ornament to the world, and whose feelings of sympathy and benevolence, bounded only by the limits of creation ; personages, who, convinced that they are discharging their own duty, look with veneration upon the virtues, talents, and zeal, of their Catholic brethren. Yes, there are in the number of dissenting clergymen, some whose friendship I possess, and am proud to enjoy—whose acquirements are great ; whose piety sincere ; and whose good will and heart-felt respect for our religion, are conspicuous.

It was your good fortune to have been placed, when a child, under the direction of a minister of the most

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amiable and liberal character: and I was pleased to hear him remark, that were you to be convinced that you would be more secure in the Catholic religion, you ought, by all means, to embrace it. Oh! I do not wish to render you unhappy. I would not, for the world, plant a thorn in that heart, where calm, and peace, and happiness, have hitherto abode. I desire to make you still more happy—to convey to your mind an unsophisticated view of the tenets which we profess, and to impart to your spirit some of the consolations, which are found so abundantly in the Catholic church.

LETTER VIII.

It is a beautiful saying of the amiable St. Francis de Sales, "that a good Christian cannot be outdone in good manners." And, if ever there was a practical comment upon an aphorism, the life of that holy prelate was a bright exemplification of the maxim.

It is a pity that a similar spirit does not direct the pens and language of many of our most distinguished writers. We should not then have to complain of the abrupt sentence of condemnation which is passed, and sometimes, too, in very unchristian-like terms, against the religion of the best and wisest of men.

How few are there among the multitude of modern

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dissenters, who have ever reflected, that the doctrines and ceremonies which they denounce as absurd and superstitious, were believed and practised, by a Constantine the great; a Charlemagne; a Louis IX.; an Alfred; a Thomas à Kempis; a Dryden; a Pope; a Fenelon; a Massillon; a Bossuet; a Columbus; a Charles Carroll; and countless other no less illustrious personages.—That religion numbered among her children all the flower of the nobility, and chivalry, and talent, and learning, and virtue, of those very countries where she is now most condemned, and proscribed!

When in fashionable circles, the subject of Catholicism is accidentally introduced, I have heard it often remarked, that that religion is here confined to servants—and they, too, are not natives, or, at all, instructed. You yourself were once heard to remark, that were you to judge of our religion from the answers made to your interrogatories, by persons of this description, you would be induced to believe that the church to which they belonged was a compound of absurdities and superstitions.

It amuses me to hear persons speaking of the want of respectability in the Catholic church. If in some places they cannot number many fashionable families in her pale, yet are there some as intelligent, respectable, and well educated, as any of our dissenting friends. And I would ask, not you—for you have too much discernment and judgment to form your ideas on

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the simplicity of domestics—but I would ask some of your acquaintances, whether it is fair, justifiable, judicious, to take up violent prejudices against the entire community of Catholics, because some domestics happen not to be as thoroughly instructed in their religion as they might be.

But it is really amusing to hear our church taunted with the want of *respectability*, when almost all the crowned heads in Europe, and by far the majority of the wealthiest, and most ancient families, beyond the Atlantic, and in our southern hemisphere—are Catholics. Even in our own republic, I might name not a few, who yield to none, in ample fortunes, elegant acquirements, and splendid virtues.

Besides, the men of profound erudition, vast investigation, boundless research, indefatigable industry, who defend the Catholic system, are more numerous and certainly far more conspicuous, than those who are arrayed against it. I have before me the writings of Dr. Milner, Dr. Lingard, Dr. Fletcher, and the Bishop of Aire: and I smile when I see advertised some flimsy and badly written "Renunciation of Popery," which, will be buried in the grave of the writer. And yet how many will devour this miserable production, who would turn with horror, from the classic, and logical effusions of those master-minds.

"Res sunt humanæ flebile ludibrium,"

is a sentiment as true, as it is difficult to translate it into

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English. You understand it perfectly, and will often have occasion to apply it in the passing events of life.

"There are among the things of earth,"
(Thus might I rhyme the poet's saying,)
"Which rouse *one's* grief, *another's* mirth,"
The reason is beyond portraying:
As for myself, where'er I see
Pedantic efforts to be wise,—
What might call forth a tear from *thee*
To mark such folly in disguise,
Will always cause a smile in me.

And it is because, perhaps, I have less sensibility, and more acquaintance with the world, than you possess. I am never more convinced of the truth and sanctity of the Catholic church, than when I peruse the angry "renunciations" of men who, from sordid or baser motives, were induced to abandon her communion. Show me a man, who, even in defence of a bad cause, or of a precipitate step, writes well and politely, and he shall not be without the respect to which talent should always be entitled. I am sure, you do not differ with me on this point. To-morrow I shall pursue my subject. The moon is shining brightly in the azure heavens, and echo seems to have gone to rest in the deep windings of the vale.

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LETTER IX.

"Les cloches, dans les aires, de leurs voix argentines
Appelloient a grand bruit les chantres a matines."

Thus opens, as you well know, the fourth canto of Boileau's "Lutrin." Embosomed in the quiet and sequestered shades of the country, far from the smallest village, I hear no sounding of clocks, no ringing of bells; but my ear is saluted at early morn, with the wood-land matin song of the lark and robin.

There is a charm, at this hour, in the country.—I love to ramble over the dewy fields—to pause by the side of the gurgling streams—to muse in the solitude of nature—where the lovely warblers of the forest strain their little throats, in the praise of Him "who feeds the birds of the air." There is as much wisdom to be learned here, by the contemplative mind, as the disciples of Plato could derive from the instructions of the academus.

When I left my study this morning, I put in my pocket a small volume containing extracts from the most eminent Protestant divines. I am fond of reading the works of celebrated men, no matter what may be their profession—and among the writers of the various denominations there are some of exalted talents and admirable conceptions.

In turning over the pages of the volume at random,

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I fell accidentally upon a passage from the far-famed Jeremy Taylor, which, I think, will prove a perpetual refutation of all the abuse and calumny which the illiberal and interested have heaped upon our church.

"There are many considerations," writes that excellent divine, "which may retain persons of much reason, and more piety, in its communion. They know it to have been the religion of their forefathers, which had possession of men's understandings before Protestantism had a name. *Its doctrines* have had a long continuance and possession of the church, which, therefore, cannot easily be supposed in the present possessors to be a design, since they have received them from so many ages.—Then comes the splendour and beauty of that church. Its pompous service; the stateliness and solemnity of its hierarchy; its name CATHOLIC; the antiquity of its doctrines, the constitutional success of its bishops and their *immediate derivation* from the apostles, its title to succeed St. Peter. Add to this the multitude and variety of persons who are of its persuasion; the consent of elder ages.—To this again add its happiness in being the instrument in converting divers nations—the piety and austerity of its religious orders; the severity of its fasts; the great reputation of its bishops for faith and sanctity; the known holiness of some of its founders of religious orders; the single life of its bishops and priests," &c. &c.

Now, in comparison with Jeremy Taylor, what are

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those ephemeral writers, who make it their business, in this country, to propagate slanders, to gather up the cobweb invectives of political economists, whose object was to pander to the vanity and prejudices of power. Was this learned man ignorant, do you think, of the history of our church, which certain fanatical compilers of mis-statements, which they style facts, are pleased to designate as the mother of iniquity and abominations! It seems to me, the most effectual antidote that can be applied to the malevolence of those men, is to place before a candid public, the sentiments and language of the ornament of the Protestant religion, Dr. Jeremy Taylor. He soars like an eagle, far above the prejudices of petty minds: he can, with unflinching eye, look upon the sun of truth, while others, whose spirits are of too vulgar a kind to bear them aloft to such brilliant contemplations, are left in gloom and cloud.

Fix *your* eye upon that orb of religion, from which light is diffused throughout this nether world. You are among the few, who can stand the rays, can tolerate the glory! Pure spirits are destined for regions of light beyond the most brilliant stars: prepare your's for those glorious spheres,—the genius of religion points to them above.

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LETTER X.

As I mused upon the beautiful terrace which stretches down upon a blooming garden, I was checked on my way, by a swarm of busy ants, that covered the superfices of the path for a considerable space.. I was cautious how I trod among these interesting insects, whose industry has been presented by the Scriptures, to the imitation of Christians. And, as I watched them, I said to myself, how these little labourers toil to provide for the time to come, and how thoughtless are most of the rational portion of creation about the future! I was struck, and could not help repeating an elegant sonnet, written by the baroness Caraccioli da Termini:

" Provida formichetta esce da quella,
Che natura le die, misera stanza,
E scorrendo per tutto have speranza
Di portar nuovo cibo a la sua cella.
Da ciel appena questa parte e quella
Fervido il sole a riscaldar 'savanza
Che sua raccolta espone a l'inconstanza
Del vento, a'improvisa e ria procella.
Formichetta infelice! e pur trovasti
In me chi compatir possa il tuo duolo,
Se indarno, al par di me, ti affiticasti
Tu in van gioisti, in vano io mi consolo
In aver raunato esca che basta:
Disperde ogni fatica un soffio solo—"

It is no easy matter to translate well from any foreign language: but I confess, that with me, the

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most difficult of all attempts is to put into English verse a good Italian sonnet.—Pardon me, then, if I do not succeed in the present. You are welcome to it, as it is:—

> The prudent little emmet strays about
> From her poor cell, by nature's hand dug out;
> Scouring, with patient industry, the earth
> In quest of some provision: from the birth
> Of the Aurora—as the orb of day
> Ascends the heavens, all she seeks to lay
> In her small granary, may be swept away
> By wind and storm. Poor ant, thou find'st in me,
> One who can feel compassion for thy worth!
> And if in vain, as it appears to be,
> *Thou* struggle*st* to provide for future want,
> I think how little *I* can hope, poor ant,
> The good things I have treasured to enjoy,
> Which one small breath, alas! may suddenly destroy.

And yet man exhausts all his labours, wastes all his strength, in hoarding up perishable treasures—which cannot follow their owner farther than the tomb; while he is reckless of those eternal things which only commence after the present life!

Am I too grave a moralist? Alas! I have seen instances of persons, who were not only regardless themselves of their immortal interest, but sought to interfere with the consciences of those under their care: unamiable beings, who imbued with prejudices against the Catholic church, exerted all their influence and au-

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thority, to prevent their relations, or friends, from following their own most sacred and awful convictions!

You may turn Moravian, Socinian, Unitarian, any thing, and not much will be said about it—but become a Catholic, and there is a general excitement—"What! has she forgotten herself so far!" exclaims one: "Has she really lost her senses, then?" exclaims another. All her friends are in arms: the clergyman who receives her into the church is denounced, her dearest associates cease to be her intimates, and, to speak in plain terms, a persecution is commenced against her.

I am not rash in making this assertion. I speak from experience. I am representing in description many a striking original—and I think you will agree with me, when you call to your recollection the history of a young and much injured convert whom you knew when living, and over whose grave you have wept, for her untimely fate. You will not object that I should bring the details of that history again before your mind, though I am confident you will shed fresh tears at the recital.

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STORY OF JANE:

A CONVERT.

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LETTER XI.

Among the tomb-stones, which arrest the stranger's eye, as he muses through the grave-yard belonging to the Cathedral of —— there is one, simple in its construction, pure in its design, surrounded by a neat railing, and shaded by a young cypress, bearing the name of her who there lies buried. While others are filled with sculptured praise, and melancholy panegyric, upon this is carved the monosyllable—JANE. This is all her epitaph. The wild-flower blossoms over the remains of her, who, had she not been brought to a cruel, and premature end, would now be its rival in freshness and bloom. There is no one who visits that sadly-beautiful spot, devoted to the dead of the Cathedral, but, after reading the many elegant, and some well merited, eulogies inscribed upon their monuments, turns, with infinite interest, to this, and feels that there must be something plaintive associated with that brief word—JANE.

Yes, stranger, her story is a doleful one: she fell, in the spring-tide of youth, a victim to the unrelenting prejudices of her once dearest friends; she pined away in the deepest pangs of affliction, a martyr to her conscience, and there lie her ashes!

You knew her well when she was the glory of her family: beautiful, accomplished, and gay as the timidly sportive fawn. She was then a protestant, rigidly devot-

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ed to her church, first in all good works, and zealous in her principles. You have seen her, yes I know too, you have frequently accompanied her, when she left the enjoyments of her fire-side, to carry relief to some poor sufferer, to wrap in comfort some wretched babe, to administer solace and aid to some heart-broken widow. You have seen her, an angel of charity and love, cheering, with her presence, the despondency of sickness, dispersing, with her smiles, the deep-fixed gloom of want and dereliction, and delighting, with more buoyancy of heart, in such scenes of mercy, than in the beauteous circles which she adorned and enlivened.

In one of her errands of charity, as she was distributing tracts from door to door, with the purest intention of enlightening, as she thought, a Catholic clergyman, she ventured to call at his house. She had never conversed with a priest, and she conscientiously pitied his delusion, and trembled for his condition.

She was met at the door by the reverend gentleman, whose manners were refined, and whose acquaintance with the world extensive.

"Pardon me," she said, "dear Sir; perhaps it may be regarded an unjustiable obtrusion on my part, thus to present myself before you, without any introduction; but I have so far overcome myself, and set aside the formalities otherwise to be observed, for the purpose of presenting you a tract; will you accept it?"

"With great pleasure," returned the priest—"and

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allow me to ask you to walk into my room. Your motive in presenting me this tract must be sincere; and I respect sincerity wherever I meet it."

Jane entered the room. Every thing around seemed strange; over the mantel-piece hung a picture of the Pope, whom she had been taught to regard as antichrist; around the walls were ranged other sacred pictures, and on his secretary stood an ivory crucifix.

A conversation immediately ensued on controversial topics, and was conducted with becoming mildness, perspecuity, and elegance, by the priest. He explained to her the light in which we view the Pope, the nature of the veneration we pay to images and to the crucifix: he marked, with peculiar emphasis, the difference between the proper doctrines of the church, and the misrepresentations of those doctrines. The effect of this interview was a correspondence on religious subjects, which continued for six months.—During that period Jane read every thing that was put into her hands by her ministers, to save her, as they asserted; and by the Catholic clergyman, to convince her of the truth.

After a thorough investigation, and a difficult struggle with her dearest prejudices, she determined to embrace the tenets of that church which she had learned to identify with error and sacrilege. Being fully instructed, she was admitted to communion, at the foot of the altar, in the little gothic chapel of ——

Oh! what an edifying sight it was to behold this

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fervent Christian, bathed in tears, and rapt in divine contemplation, receiving, for the first time, the body of the Lord. It was early on a bright Sunday of May, when the first-born flowers of the garden decorated and perfumed the tabernacle, and the gentle tapers calmly glimmered, like the peace-stars of Eden, around the shrine of saint ——.

There knelt the lovely convert, a wreath of flowers on her head; a white veil flowing to the ground: a smile of rapture upon her cheek, and her eye beaming with serenity and joy.

Oh! from that heaven
To which her spirit hath now flown
(By persecution from this cold world driven)
Angels then looked down
And smiled upon the sight:

They saw in her,
One, fit to mingle in *their* throng;
Too pure, too meek, to be a sufferer
On earth, and now she shines among
Her sister-angels bright.

I pause here; we shall soon arrive at the conclusion of her history.

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LETTER XII.

I resume the story of Jane. Have you not wept at the manner, in which, she, who had been her family's idol, as a Protestant, was, afterwards, treated as a Catholic?

On returning home from the chapel, she was met, not with the welcome of a parents' love, but with stern reproof, and cold disdain. Even her youngest sisters, who formerly used to rush into her arms, and vie for the first embrace, were instructed to keep aloof, and look askance. Oh! what a pang to the tender heart of Jane! What agony did she not suffer, when she found her father's house, the once abode of love and happiness, suddenly converted into a strange place, in which she felt as lost.

"What means this woful change, papa!" she sighed, as her father coldly past her by—and burst into a flood of tears. Her father made no reply.

She then flew into her mother's room—but on her mother's face the benign expression of affection smiled no more; she fixed a scowling look on Jane, and exclaimed: "disgrace! disgrace!"

"Oh mamma!" she sighed—and sobbed bitterly, "how have I become the disgrace"—she could say no more.

"Yes you have brought shame upon your family."

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"Have I been guilty of any crime, mamma!"

"Guilty! no words can express the enormity of your guilt."

"What then have I done!"

"Do you ask me such a question? Where were you this morning? Whence have you just come? What have you been led to ——"

"Mamma, I became a Catholic from conviction ——"

"So much the greater guilt—you acknowledge that you are convinced you are lost, you are ruined."

"Alas! my dearest, dearest mamma, speak not thus ——"

"You will no longer find a mother in me. You have forfeited my love, you have incurred the displeasure of your family for ever!"

"For ever!" exclaimed Jane—and almost distracted with anguish, left her mother's room.

Yes, it was for ever! for Jane, there was no more the endearment of home; the angel of peace took his flight from that sanctuary, where the demon of prejudice prevailed. The temptation to relapse, to yield, was powerful: no, to a spirit like her's it was naught. Her conscience told her she was acting well; the panoply of heaven was extended over her heart, and, with the grace of HIM who penetrates the secrets of the soul, and who *judgeth justices*, she acquired an almost omnipotent energy. For the sake of her heavenly Father,

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she could brave the frowns of her earthly parents, whom still she loved—adored; and, in order to obtain a mansion in his kingdom, she hesitated not to be exiled from their house, of which, but a short time since, she was deemed the guardian angel. She remembered the awful sentence of the Redeemer, the most dutiful of all children: "He that loveth father and mother more than me, is not worthy of me."

Among strangers, however, there was not wanting an asylum for the young victim of paternal intolerance: the bosom of sympathy beat warmly in her regard, and hundreds of new friends emulated one another in wiping away her tears, and inspiring her with consolation.

But, what can compensate for the loss of home! what could soothe the wasting affliction of a heart, which clung, with tenderest devotion, to the sacred associations of her family! No, there was nothing to support her moral energy but religion; her physical strength began to yield, and her spirits, lately so elastic and buoyant, to wither and decay. She sickened, and, in the space of a few weeks, she was but the shadow of herself, the skeleton of Jane! She could not eat; sleep fled from her pillow; and death hastened apace. You were among the few true friends, who did not forsake her; at the peril of the intimacy of her family, you sat by her bed-side, during her illness; you mingled your

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tears with her's; you breathed the spirit of solace into her sinking bosom.

You witnessed the last moments of a perfect Christian—praying, with oppressive emotions, for her dear parents; naming, with kindling affection, her little sisters; and only expressing one wish, to die in their arms;—she died in yours.

And while that tomb, that simple tomb,
Beneath the willow shall remain,
The stranger oft shall learn the doom
Recorded in the name of JANE.

LETTER XIII.

May it not then be asserted, with some grounds, that there exists, even in this free country, an unrelenting spirit of opposition to the Catholic religion? Was I guilty of rashness when I remarked, that, if a member of a family brought up in any dissenting denomination, becomes a Catholic, too often a persecution is commenced, and every means had recourse to, in order to shake the convictions, and fetter the liberty, of the convert?

Still, nothwithstanding this, how many have defied all opposition, have risen above all prejudice and at-

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tached themselves to the Catholic church? From all ranks of society, from the highest classes of wealth and fashion—young and old, male and female, ministers and laymen, I could number many.

Yes, even the desks of Protestantism have been forsaken by some of their most eminent men, who have done homage to the truth of our church, and become her firmest pillars. You have not forgotten the conversion of the honourable and reverend George Spencer, formerly chaplain to the Bishop of London, and brother to Lord Althorp. I knew him well; I saw him a simple student in the English college at Rome; I heard him deliver his first discourse, as a Catholic divine, in the church of *Gesu Maria*, in the Corso, to a crowded assemblage of English, and Americans: I marked the sincerity of his manner, plain but dignified; serious but amiable; energetic but tolerant.

It afforded me extreme pleasure to meet in person that illustrious character, concerning whose conversion, which was denied by a writer in the Gazette of ——, I had been drawn into a correspondence. The account of his change, which, was stated in that paper to be a fabrication, I found to be perfectly authentic: all the details were true, all the facts as they originally occurred: and I cordially shook the hand of my brother priest, the son of Lord Spencer.

In our country, several Protestant ministers have embraced the Catholic religion. Within my own recol-

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lection there were many:—some of whom are still living, practising, with primitive fervour, the duties of that church. Another is dead—and never died a man of more sterling integrity, honest conviction, and genuine virtues, than George Ironsides. Faith has lighted her torch over his grave, and Hope and Peace are watching over his ashes!

These men were educated in prejudice: and, before they made themselves thoroughly acquainted with Catholicity, were as much opposed to its doctrines, as they were afterwards convinced of its truth. It was a glorious triumph to our cause, to gain over, at once, from the Protestant church some of her former champions. It was a spectacle calculated to awaken public attention, and induce investigation. "What!" did many observe, "If such men as these, learned, wise, and virtuous, brought up from their cradle in a system so different from that which they embraced, could, after mature inquiry, avow their change in so important a matter, must they not have had solid grounds to act on?

Yes, they had. They could not be accused of interested motives, for they resigned their livings, and threw themselves upon their talents, and their resources. They must have been influenced by supernatural inducements. Their subsequent conduct has proved it, and their example should serve as a model of imitation for others.

I have placed it before you, because I know you will admire their consistency: and, I feel, too, that when

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once convinced, your name will be added to theirs, as another light kindled from the sun of truth, and mingling its meek lustre with the splendour of religion.

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IDOLATRY.

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LETTER XIV.

I write this under a broad oak, on as beautiful a morning as ever dawned on the world. Upon the lawn, fragrant with fresh grass, and bespangled with dew-drops, the snowy sheep are browzing, and the tender lambs are sporting. And, I remember, besides, that this is your birth-day.

> This is thy birth-day—know'st thou not, young friend,
> That from thy years of life one more hath gone
> For ever, and for ever?—hast thou ne'er
> Paused in thine innocence before the leaves
> That show their first, fair greenness to the spring?
> Perchance while viewing them, some lovely one,
> Nipped in its youth, hath fallen at thy feet,
> And withered, never to be fair again.
>
> That fallen leaf, methinks, resembles well,
> The year which hath just left thee. There are still
> Many remaining—but there is one less.
>
> Yet hath thy birth-day joys to greet thee still;
> Health, vigour, beauty, still are left with thee.
> Hope's wild, yet fragrant flower, is opening bright,
> And heaven is smiling on thine innocence.
>
> This is thy birth-day—yes, it is—it is:
> Then joy be with thee and thy parents; joy
> With all who soothe thee with the name of friend,
> And as thy years flow from thee, turn thine eyes
> To that bright heaven, where time shall be no more.

For my own part, I love to carry my thoughts into eternity, where the Spirits of the just are mingling in the communion of heaven, and looking down with vigilant

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anxiety upon their friends who are still struggling in this valley of tears. I am not among those, who hold, that the saints in the bosom of their God, have forgotten their brethren on earth; that they feel no interest in, and have no knowledge of, the affairs of mortals.

No, "I believe in the communion of saints."—I believe that I may address my prayers to them, and I believe that they can hear, and, through the merits of Christ, can assist, me. Yes, all this I believe, notwithstanding the charge of idolatry which is alleged against me for so doing, by no obscure opponents.

I will examine whether the charge be grounded—whether for requesting a parent or a friend in heaven to pray for me, I am to be ranked among the pagans, and made like to those who invoked the gods and goddesses of old.

The reformation, was not undertaken on this ground: when Luther separated from the ancient church, it was not because he saw in the practice of praying to the saints anything that bordered on idolatry. He had other motives; he was impelled by other causes. For, in his sermon on the feast of St John the Baptist, addressing his audience on this very topic, he says: "You do not sin by asking them (the saints,) to pray for you."

The pretext of idolatry was assumed, as the learned Dr. Milner remarks, by the Duke of Somerset, with a view of inflaming the passions of the ignorant against the Catholic church, and in order to effect the revolution

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which ensued. The tenet regarding the invocation of saints, was accordingly misrepresented—it was identified with the senseless rites of paganism; it was denounced as derogatory from the infinite merits of Christ, and contradictory to the plain meaning of the Scriptures.

This was a popular manœuvre:—the ignorant multitude began to imagine that the religion of Christ was at stake—and that it depended on their zeal and energy, to save the last remnant of truth; to kindle once more the dying embers of pure religion—and to inflict a merited chastisement on those sacrilegious beings, who had spread darkness over the face of Christianity, and almost plunged the world back into the chaos of idolatry.

Nor was this spirit confined to the ignorant and the low; it communicated itself to many of the ablest writers of those days; it breathed through their discourses, and insinuated its venom into all their productions.

The outcry, raised against this doctrine at that era of confusion and change, has rebounded from clime to clime, and from century to century. The echo of the present age, and in our free republic, still repeats, though with a fainter sound—Idolatry.

Yes, too often does the grave "professor," instead of instructing his theological pupils in the science of truth, instead of proclaiming facts, and expounding ecclesiastical history, too often, I repeat, does he forget his dignity, and join in the vulgar cry—Idolatry.

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Even the drowsy "watchman," as he paces his solitary rounds through the darkness of the night, as he attempts to vociferate the hours, stammers, with stentorian lungs,—Idolatry.

Thus is the popular shout kept up, from the all-solemn Doctor of Divinity, down to the all-ludicrous menial of the midnight tribe!

What motive can there be, in this age of investigation and liberal opinion, to continue the odious shout? Is it to be supposed that Americans are to be alarmed by the bugbear of old English invention? Is there not intellect, judgment, perspicacity enough, in the minds of the "lords of human kind," to see through the flimsy texture in which prejudice and policy have laboured to involve the tenets of our church?

I have merely to state those tenets as we really believe them, as they are taught by the Church, and the candid minds of our countrymen, will perceive how much we have been injured and abused. They will be convinced that it is only by misstating, that our opponents can succeed in exciting opposition, and keeping alive prejudice. It frequently happens, that the most rigid believers in those misrepresentations, when they discover how systematically they have been imposed upon, are the first to enter into an investigation of religious matters, and, often too, the first in returning to the bosom of their mother, the much injured and calumniated church.

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Oh, that I may succeed in convincing you that the ideas which you have derived from your earliest education on the subject of our religion, are incorrect.—I know what the result will be.

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INVOCATION OF SAINTS.

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LETTER XV.

I was on the point of returning home, to breakfast, after concluding my last letter, when a gentleman of advanced years, and accomplished manners rode up, and inquired of me the way to ——. He observed that he was a missionary of the —— church, and his object in going to the village in question, was to preach a series of sermons. As I found him communicative, I took the liberty of asking him to accompany me to my country-home, to rest himself, and breakfast with me. He readily consented, and, in a few minutes, we reached the "alley green."

The reverend gentleman had no idea that I was a Catholic, and I deemed it prudent, lest I might have destroyed his appetite, not to reveal the secret to him until we had finished our breakfast.

"You observed, sir," I then said, "that you are on your way to —— in order to deliver a set of sermons: may I inquire, on what subject it is your intention to preach?"

"I purpose, sir," he replied, "to expose the absurdity of the Roman Catholic doctrines; they are so perfectly unscriptural, so untenable, that I am surprised how any one who feels any respect for the Christian system, can possibly admit them."

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"And still they are believed by most of the learned, and the good," I returned.

The missionary looked doubtfully upon me, and becoming suspicious of my orthodoxy, would gladly have diverted the conversation, had I not purposely continued the subject.

"I thank you sincerely, sir," he blandly said, "for the hospitality you have extended to me ——" and was on the point of departing, when,

"Pray, reverend sir, may not your ideas of Catholicism be erronous?" I asked—

"Every one knows enough of that religion to condemn it," was his reply. "For instance, the doctrine it maintains of praying to the saints is abominable. It places Mary, a mere woman, on an equal footing with the Son of God, and transforms the saints into deities."

"Are you certain that the doctrine of the Roman Catholic church is as you have stated it?" I again asked.

"Read the Renunciation of Popery, Blanco White, the History of Popery, Dr.——'s Essay, and judge for yourself."

"Read Dr. Milner, the Amicable Discussion, and the Papist Misrepresented and Represented," I retorted. "It is surely not from the avowed enemies of the church, that you are to learn her genuine doctrines. We should drink of the pure fountain, if we desire to be refreshed with a limpid draught, and not of that turbid stream,

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thickened with the influx of a thousand prejudices and a thousand misrepresentations."

"If you do not believe the doctrine, my dear sir, as I have stated it to be, you cannot be a Catholic," he insisted.

"I do not believe it in that sense," I returned, "and yet I *am* a Catholic: and moreover, I contend that were I to admit your interpretation of it, instead of being a Catholic, I would be an idolater."

"*You* are an enlightened scholar," urged the missionary, "but the ignorant, do they not believe that the saints may be invoked as possessing power, of themselves, independent of the merits of the Redeemer?"

"The ignorant are taught the common catechism,' I returned; and having a copy upon my table, I opened the part relating to this subject, and read the following passage: "We are to honour them (the saints) as God's special friends and servants, but NOT WITH THE HONOUR WHICH BELONGS TO GOD."

The missionary became manifestly impatient, and begging me to excuse him, as the time appointed to reach the village had almost arrived, and not a moment was to be lost. He mounted his horse, bade me good morning, and rode off. I did not hear what was the tenor of his sermon on the subject we were discussing. But I should not wonder, if he repeated the very same misstatements which I carefully sought to rectify.

When for the future, then, you hear us stigmatized as

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idolaters for praying to the saints, remember the missionary.

LETTER XVI.

"Yet hear me, Samson; not that I endeavour
To lessen or extenuate my offence:
But that on th' other side, if it be weighed
By itself, with aggravations, not surcharged,
Or else with just allowance counterpoised,
I may, if possible, thy pardon find."

You have read the Samson Agonistes of Milton, and remember, no doubt, these lines, put into the mouth of Delila. Had the missionary remained a little longer, I might have repeated them to him, in whose estimation, I was guilty of the most grievous offence against the spirit of Christianity, by admitting the propriety of praying to the saints. I rejoice that *you* have the patience to read my letters, and hear my views and arguments on these important articles of religious faith.

Is it then true, that the Catholic church teaches that the saints possess any power to grant our petitions, except as far as they derive it from God! can I pray to the virgin Mary as to one who can *command* her son in the strict acceptation of the term? am I to believe that the merits of Christ are insufficient of themselves, or that it is absolutely necessary that I should invoke any

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particular saint, in order to have those merits applied to my soul! In a word, is it, in any way, derogatory to the mediatorship of the Redeemer to recommend myself to the prayers of the just in heaven?

I refer you to the Council of Trent, the constitution, I may call it, of the Catholic church: in which our doctrines are distinctly defined, and from which there can be no appeal.

In the twenty-fifth session, you will find this proposition. "The saints reigning with Christ, offer up their prayers for men. It is *good* and *useful* suppliantly to invoke them, and to have recourse to their prayers—to obtain favours from God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who is alone our Redeemer and Saviour."

And in the catechism of the Council, published by order of Pope Pius V., part the fourth, on Prayer, it is expressly stated, that "we do not address God or the saints in the same manner: God we implore to grant us the blessings of which we stand in need; but the saints because they are the friends of God, we solicit to undertake the advocacy of our cause with him, to obtain for us, from him, all necessaries for soul and body Hence we make use of two different sorts of prayer; to God we properly say, "have mercy on us;" but to the saints, "pray for us."

This is very different from the doctrine imputed to us, in the periodicals, and bigoted essays, of the day. I adhere not to the creed formed for me by my adversa-

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ries, but to that drawn up and promulgated by the councils of the church.

Again permit me to direct your attention to another authority of high respectability: which every Catholic reveres, and whose statements of our tenets are, in every respect, conformable to the unanimous belief of all instructed members of the church.

Drs. Challoner and Gother are two venerable names in the records of Catholicism: under their sanction and supervision, a small book was published, to which I before alluded, entitled "The Papist Misrepresented and Represented:" in that book I find the following anathema: "Cursed is he that believes the saints in heaven to be his redeemers, that prays to them as such, or that gives God's honour to them, or to any other creature.'

To this anathema, I most cordially subscribe, and so will you, and every consistent Christian. Nor will I, or you, or any other Christian, hesitate a moment to say "amen" to this one: "Cursed is every goddess worshipper, that believes the B. Virgin Mary to be any more than a creature, that worships her, or puts his trust in her more than in God; that believes her above her son, or that she can in any thing command him."

Judge now, whether the invocation of saints is idolatrous; and whether I should be condemned for vindicating its propriety.

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And yet I know, it will be said,
Repeated, urged, insisted on,
That rites idolatrous are paid
To saints, by every genuine son
Of Popery!

That Mary, like some goddess old,
Some Juno glittering on her car,
Can o'er her Son dominion hold
And hurl his thunderbolts afar
O'er land and sea.

That the deluded papist leaves
The altar of the sovereign Lord,
And making her his goddess, weaves
His chaplets at her shrine—adored,
(Oh! profanation!)

In place of Him, the eternal One,
Who claims the homage of mankind:
And heedless of the only Son—
To saints and Mary is confined
His adoration!

This is not the most elegant poetry, but perhaps a ludicrous strophe or two will occasionally tend to vary the monotony of a grave controversial correspondence. Perhaps there is no subject which presents fewer attractions to the young mind than that of controversy. Even Moore's work, "Travels of an Irish gentleman in search of Religion," is left on the shelf untouched and unread, by thousands who devour his Llalah Rookh, and feast on his Melodies. The Hind and Panther of Dryden, which contains as much good poetry as any

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other of his productions, finds very few admirers; and had he written nothing else, he would have been, long since, buried in oblivion; or had that poem been the offspring of some modern Catholic, it would have been regarded as unworthy a liberal and poetical mind. And yet it is the effusion of Dryden.

LETTER XVII.

I this day heard the doleful news of the death of our dear and promising young friend Oscar ——. The letter communicating this intelligence, now lies on my table deeply sealed with black, and stained with the tears of her who wrote it. It informs me that his brother is actually at —— awaiting the arrival in port of the ship which brings to his mother's arms the remains of her darling! oh what an amiable youth has been taken from us!—what a generous, high-minded, religious member of society has fallen! and how sad is the reflection, that, after an absence of so long a time, when on the point of finishing his education in Europe, and about to return to his native land, he was attacked by a mortal disease, and, ere yet the shores of Europe had disappeared, he died on the sea!

Oh never breathed upon this earth
A nobler, gentler, spirit:
I knew him, knew his native worth,
His virtue, and his merit.

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His features manly and refined,
  His person elegant and tall,
His manners graceful, and his mind
  Pure and ethereal—

Upon the distant shores of France,
  Afar from those he loved so dearly,
He sought in science to advance
  And to improve in virtue yearly.

At length approached the welcome day,
  When all his anxious studies o'er,
He was again to bend his way
  Back to his native shore.

The sea was lovely, through the foam
  The gallant ship in triumph sped;
As though exulting towards her home
  To bear this boy—she bore him *dead*.

Yes, scarcely had the misty peaks
  Of Europe's mountains shrunk away,
Than death sat on his pallid cheeks
  And closed his eyes for ever to the day!

The sea breeze has sung his requiem, on the trackless ocean, and the mermaids have wept for the early and premature fate of poor Oscar! While, we can have no doubt, bright angels have borne away his immortal spirit to the regions of the good and the pious. Oh! may not he, that loving son, brother, friend, in the bosom of his God, pour forth his prayers for those who are left bewailing behind him! Where is the feeling heart that could doubt it! Where the bosom that would not throb to think that there is in heaven one

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spirit that will ever interest itself for an exile on earth. And if he can pray for me, what impropriety can there be in my invoking him? Will not his prayers avail me? Does not St. James declare that "the prayers of the righteous avail much." He makes no distinction between those of a righteous man on earth, or in heaven. The proposition is general and explicit: "the prayers of the righteous avail much."

Gentle spirit, that hast departed from the comely frame which now lies in the stream, look down from the celestial spheres to which thou hast flown, upon thy friend! Mingle thy orisons with those of the myriads of spirits which surround the throne of the most High, and pour forth the odours of their prayers to the Lamb who was slain for us. Pray for me, that I may pass in safety through the infinite perils which beset my path in this valley of wo.

Will you not join in this supplication? Oh how consoling it is to the feeling heart to sigh out its aspirations to those who are in heaven!

LETTER XVIII.

St. Paul was in the habit of recommending himself to the prayers of the faithful. In his Epistle to the Romans, fifteenth chapter and thirtieth verse, he writes thus: I beseech you, therefore, brethren, through our

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Lord Jesus Christ, and by the charity of the Holy Ghost, that you assist me in your prayers for me to God," &c.

Cannot I, with the same spirit, and always referring the efficacy of their prayers to the merits of Christ, call upon the brethren in heaven, to assist me?

God himself commanded the friends of Job, to go to that good man, and supplicate his intercession.—You will find this fact recorded in the forty-first chapter of the book of Job, verses seven and eight: "And after the Lord had spoken these words to Job, he said to Eliphaz the Temanite; my wrath is kindled against thee and against thy two friends; because you have not spoken the thing that is right before me, as my servant Job hath, take unto you therefore, seven oxen, and seven rams, and go to my servant Job, and offer for yourselves a holocaust: and my servant Job SHALL PRAY FOR YOU; his face I will accept, that folly be not imputed to thee."

Thus does it appear manifest, that the Lord would not receive the holocausts of Eliphaz, until Job had prayed for him. It was a condition which could not be dispensed with: and, had not that holy man interceded for him, the wrath of heaven must have fallen upon his head.

Who knows but there is some Job among the saints of heaven, whom the Almighty wills me to invoke? who can tell, whether it will not depend on the prayers

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of that righteous spirit, that the indignation of God may be appeased? My holocausts, my tears, my supplications may not be acceptable: those of Eliphaz were not. Is it, then, improper for me to send up my prayers to the saints, beseeching them, if *I* cannot find mercy, that *they*, like Job, would intercede before the throne of divine justice!

But, it is said, we worship the saints. What is meant by worship? Do we pay to them that adoration which is due to God alone, and which he will not suffer to be given to another. If so, we are indeed idolaters—worse than the ancient Romans, more inexcusable than the modern Chinese.

I need hardly answer such a question. You know full well that we merely venerate or respect the saints, as the special friends of God; we adore only God.

Nor does it follow because we kneel before an image, that we are guilty of idolatry. Abraham bowed before the angels, as is related in the nineteenth chapter and second verse of Genesis: "And when he had lifted up his eyes there appeared to him three men, standing near him; and as soon as he saw them he ran to meet them from the door of his tent, and *adored down to the ground.* Think you, was it idolatry in Abraham to prostrate himself thus, before the angels? You know that it was not. Let it not then be deemed idolatry, when the Catholic kneels before a sacred image.

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Joshua too, as we find recorded in his own book, fifth chapter and fourteenth verse, fell on his face in the presence of an angel. "Joshua fell on his face to the ground, and *worshipping*, said: what saith my Lord to his servant."

We worship the saints, as that great prophet worshipped the angel. If it is wrong, he has given the example. But who will accuse him of derogating from the honour due to God: Catholics, then, should cease to be vituperated, when they have so unexceptionable a precedent to guide them.

But it is objected, Saint John attempted to worship the angel, and was reproved for so doing—"And I fell upon my face," he writes, "to adore him, and he saith to me, see thou do it not; I am thy fellow servant—adore God." This text is found in Revelations, chapter nineteenth, tenth verse.

This proves nothing against our dogma. In the first place, it must appear evident, that one angel would not reprehend, what another had approved. But, in the two former cases, the angels accepted the worship of Abraham and Joshua. John would not, therefore, have been chided, for following the example of those venerable men.

He must consequently have imagined that it was the Deity himself he was conversing with; and under that impression, fell upon his face in order to offer him strict and religious adoration—that *latria*, which is due.

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to God alone. It was then the angel informed him of his misapprehension, and assured him that it was the vision merely of a servant of the Almighty, not of the Almighty himself.

"Adore God." Yes, it is to that supreme and omnipotent Being, we must pay our adoration. But, as he does not forbid me to respect a mortal, to feel towards him the regard which his merit and virtues deserve, neither is he unwilling that I should evince some external tokens of veneration for those already in possession of that glory, which is prepared for all!

LETTER XIX.

In conversing, some time since, with a very devoted friend of yours, the subject on which I wrote you in my last letter was accidentally brought up. She, at first, had strong objections to praying to the saints. But, after hearing several arguments in defence of the doctrine, she was compelled to admit, that if they can hear us, there can be no impropriety in invoking them.

Let us examine whether it be necessary for them to be omnipresent, in order that our prayers may reach them. I affirm that it is not: that, through the power of Him whose presence they are enjoying, and in whose majesty all things are reflected, they may know

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what is going on in this world, and may hear the prayers which are sent up to them.

Eliseus was a mortal, and certainly not possessed of any of the attributes of the Deity, still, from the banks of the Jordan, he saw as far as Syria, and knew what was going on in that distant region. The sacred writer relates that "the king of Syria warred against Israel, and took counsel with his servants saying: in such and such a place let us lay ambushes, and the man of God sent to the king of Israel saying: beware that thou pass not to such a place: for the Syrians are there in ambush." 2 Kings, chap. 6. v. 8 and 9.

If the prophet in Judea knew what was occurring in Syria, why cannot the prophet in heaven be aware of what is taking place on earth?

Nay, our Saviour himself expressly assures us, that the angels not only know the manifest transactions of the world, but even penetrate into the deepest secrecies of the human heart.

He says, in the fifteenth chapter of St. Luke, tenth verse: that "there shall be joy before the angels of God doing penance," or, as the Protestant version has it, *repenting*.

Now, that the angels might rejoice at the conversion of a sinner, it is surely necessary for them to be acquainted with that conversion. But you will admit, every one will admit, that conversion may take place in the silence, and profoundest secrecy of the soul; the

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last dying aspiration may be sufficient. Consequently the angels, who rejoice at the repentance of a sinner, must see the most silent workings of the human conscience. Therefore it is plain, that the angels know what is transpiring in this nether world. But the saints are participators of the sublime privileges of the angels, enjoying the same heaven, and possessing the same God, therefore the difficulty of our friend is solved and no other objection remains in her mind, against the practice of praying to them.

The question how they hear us, is quite irrelevant; we may as well ask where heaven is. Certainly spirits disenthralled from the incumbrances of the body, do not stand in need of visual rays, and undulating sounds, to see and hear us. If with the velocity of the lightnings flash, my fancy can speed away to the most remote realms of the old world; if, while I am writing in this rustic abode, on this side the Atlantic, my imagination instantaneously bears me to the cupola of St. Peter's, or upon the leaning tower of Pisa, tell me, is it philosophical to ask *how* the spirits of the just, free and glorified, can hear when I invoke them?

Wrapt into ecstasy,
And feasting on the presence of their God,
From their bright thrones on high
They see the things of earth; the abode
Of mortals is traced out upon
The mirror of his splendour—there they view,
Reflected brilliantly whate'er is done
On this dark orb—they hear each sigh,
And count each tear that drops from sorrow's eye.

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LETTER XX.

You tell me, that Dr. —— of the Episcopal church, considers the difficulty of the saints hearing our prayers as insuperable. "If they can be aware of the events occurring in America and Europe, Asia, and Africa, at the same time, they must be *omnipresent*," he remarked.

This objection, I have, I think, already replied to: but I am singularly astonished that it should be urged by a gentleman, devotedly attached to his religion, which believes in the existence of *witchcraft*, *sorceries*, &c. That is to say, a minister admitting all the doctrines of the church of England, is bound to believe, that the evil spirit may, and sometimes does, exercise his malign influence, when imprecated in any part of the world. Does it follow that he is obliged to believe the devil to be omnipresent? And if that dark spirit can exert his diabolical power over the persons of individuals of every clime, how is it that the bright spirits of heaven cannot exercise a benevolent and holy influence over men, in every region. I think, therefore, that Dr. —— has evinced and expressed much inconsistency, in this particular. What think you?

The case of Dives and Abraham seems to decide beyond the possibility of cavil, the question now under consideration. Dives after feasting sumptuously, and disregarding the miseries of Lazarus, died, and, in scriptural language, was buried in hell. Finding himself in that

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abode of wo and reprobation, he called upon Abraham to relieve his sufferings. There was a chaos between them; and yet Abraham could hear him. You know the particulars of the narration I allude to, and I shall not repeat them.

Now, if Abraham could hear the complaints of that unfortunate rich man, why cannot Abraham hear the prayers of a soul on earth. Heaven, if I may be allowed to speak thus, is not more distant from earth, than was the place in which Abraham then was, from the realms of perdition.

This objection being removed, can you refuse to admit the proposition, that it is lawful and profitable to pray to the saints? that they may assist and bless us? We read in Genesis, the twenty-second chapter and twenty sixth-verse, that Jacob demanded the blessing of the angel with whom he had wrestled: "I will not let thee go," he said, "unless thou bless me."

Again, in the forty-eighth chapter and sixteenth verse, he invoked the angel's blessing upon the sons of Joseph. "The angel," he exclaimed, "that delivereth me from all evil, bless these boys."

Certainly, if Jacob could call upon the angel, and the angel could hear him, the two-fold difficulty is resolved: namely, first, that it is lawful to invoke the heavenly spirits; and secondly, that they can hear our invocations; and this, is the whole secret and mystery of that

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tenet of our church, which is so grossly misrepresented, and so recklessly condemned.

St. John, in the book of Revelations, chapter eighth, verses third and fourth, relates how he saw the prayers of the saints poured out before the throne of God.

"And another angel came, and stood before the altar, having a golden censer: and there was given to him much incense, that *he should offer of the prayers of all saints*, upon the golden altar, which is before the throne of God.

"And the smoke of the incense of the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God, from the hand of the angel."

What further scriptural evidence do we need in support of this Catholic tenet? I leave you to judge, whether the assertions of our adversaries on the subject are true or false. After calmly reviewing the premises I have established on grounds the most incontrovertible, you will draw your own consequence—or rather the consequence will flow, of itself—that it is proper and useful to pray to the saints.

Oh! as before
The golden altar, from their censers flinging
Their incense, angels pour
The fragrance of their prayers,
May they remember us! when singing
Their hallelujahs through the heavenly spheres,
In one sweet chorus vieing,

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May they implore,
The pity of our Maker!—while with theirs,
Our orisons are mingled—in this vale of tears.

LETTER XXI.

Not long since, I attended the consecration of a new Jewish Synagogue: and I must confess that much interest was excited in my bosom for the strange condition of the once chosen people of God. I could not but indulge in the most solemn reflections, when I beheld these fragments of the remnant of Israel, without priest, or sacrifice, and with an altered and meagre ceremonial, dedicating for themselves a temple—oh! how little like that of Jerusalem!

No rams smoked on their altars: no oxen poured out their blood in sacrifice: no incense, flung from the golden censers of the Levites, ascended to the throne of the most High. No "workmanship of the ephod" appeared—the breast plate of Aaron was not to be seen—the eye looked in vain for the "tunics and girdles and mitres of glory and beauty." The splendid, the magnificent ceremonial of the ancient law, has dwindled away into a meagre and almost unmeaning form.

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But while I find fault with the ceremonies of the Jewish people, at the present day; while I deplore their condition, and pity their delusion, I must not forget the exclamation of a daughter of the Synagogue when witnessing the solemnities of Good Friday in the Catholic Church: "What an infatuation to be a Christian?"

You, too, have assured me, that a truly amiable and elegant companion of yours, once observed, that she deemed the Catholic as benighted, and as much to be pitied, as the modern Hebrew.

It does not astonish me to perceive how prejudiced the Jews generally are against us. But, if you continue to devote your attention to the arguments which I adduce in favour of our religion, you will be able to convince your otherwise intelligent and excellent friend of her mistake.

Read to her what I have said on the subject of the invocation of saints: and then inform her, on the authority which I am about to bring before you, that this tenet was admitted and reduced to practice, by all Christendom, before the Reformation.

To ascertain the belief of the ancient Christians, on this topic, we must refer to the writings of the most distinguished men. We must consult the fathers of the church whose works are extant, monuments at once of their learning and their faith.

St. Irenæus, who lived but a short time after the

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apostolic times, in his work against heresy, book fifth, chapter nineteenth, writes thus:

"As Eve was seduced to fly from God, so was the Virgin Mary induced to obey him, that she might become the *advocate* of her that had fallen."

"I will fall on my knees!" exclaims Origen in his Treatise on the Lamentations, "and not presuming, on account of my crimes, to present my prayer to God, *I will invoke all the saints* to my assistance. O all ye saints of heaven, I beseech you....fall at the feet of the Lord of mercies for me, a miserable sinner."

"Hear now, O daughter of David," cries out St Athanasius in his work on the gospel, "incline thine ear to our prayers! We raise our cry to thee. Remember us, O most holy Virgin; and for the feeble eulogiums we give thee, give us some share in thy precious treasure of grace, thou who art full of grace."

"We stand in need of many graces," said St. Gregory of Nyssa to the martyr Theodosius: "intercede for your country before our common master and sovereign. We are fearful of great miseries and the utmost perils. The cruel Scythian approaches and threatens war. O soldier, fight for us. Martyr, speak boldly for us, your countrymen.....

"Admonish Peter, solicit Paul, call John, the beloved disciple, and let them intercede for the churches which they themselves have founded."

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St. Ambrose, in his preparation for death, expresses himself thus:

"That my prayer may become more efficacious, I invoke the suffrage of the B. Virgin Mary..... I implore the intercession of the Apostles....the assistance of the martyrs....the supplications of the confessors."

St. Augustine bears testimony in his book "on the City of God," that it was customary for the Christians to address this simple prayer to the saints: "Remember me."

In his Meditations, chapter fortieth, he calls upon the "holy and immaculate Virgin Mary to intercede in his behalf—celestial choirs of angels, archangels, patriarchs, prophets, apostles, evangelists, martyrs, confessors, priests, levites, monks, virgins, and all the just, by him who has elected you, and the contemplation of whom forms your felicity, I entreat you to supplicate the Lord for me, a miserable sinner."

These are but a few isolated and brief extracts, from some of the doctors of the church, whose names are revered, not only by Catholics, but by all denominations of Christians.

An Augustin, an Ambrose, a Jerome, a Chrysostom, a Gregory Nazianzen, a Gregory of Nyssa, a Basil, an Athanasius, invoked the saints, demonstrated the propriety of it—and I certainly feel more safe in imitating such illustrious personages, than in condemning the venerable dogma which they reduced to practice.

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Tell me, would you not rather be the disciple of those sainted men, than of the author of certain quaint and shallow "Renunciations." When you hear the modern teacher inveighing, with dogmatic self-sufficiency, against the invocation of saints, think of the testimonies I have cited in its vindication; and judge for yourself.

LETTER XXII.

When on a visit to your city, last winter, I chanced to pass, in the evening, by a small church, which, being well lighted up, presented an inviting appearance. With the view of examining the interior, and to hear the sermon which was then going on, I entered, and seated myself in a remote place to observe more easily and freely every thing around. There were few auditors of the discourse, which was delivered by a middle-aged gentleman, of grave appearance, and unaffected manner.

From the text, I augured favourably of the discourse: I believed, that a minister commenting on the beautiful precept of charity, could not utter an expression which would not breathe sympathy and benevolence towards all mankind. But what was my surprise, when digressing from the amiable topic, he began to descant

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on the fanaticism of the crusaders, and the terrors of the Vatican, and the abominations of popery.

Oh! charity, sister of faith,
And hope divine!
Daughter of heaven, tell me, where hath
Thy spirit fixed her shrine?
Methought that in the unruffled breast
Of meek religion's humble priest,
That spirit should preside:
That he who peace proclaims, should be
The pattern of his ministry,
The foe to envy and to pride.

But no; in preaching peace to earth
He grasps the thunders of his wrath,
And hurls them at the sacred hearth.
Kindling anew the bigot's flame,
And strewing, in religion's name,
With discord and dismay his neighbour's path.

Let us see, whether all the ministers of the church to which the gentleman of the little temple belongs, were as uncharitable, and illiberal. Consult the works of the father of the Reformation, and though you will find in them incredible inconsistency, still, in his more solemn moods, he does not refuse his tribute of respect for the custom of praying to the saints. In his treatise "on the Six Precepts," chapter fifth, he holds this language:

"The saints can do all things, and through them God will grant you as much as you believe you will receive from them."

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"I have never denied," he again writes in his reply to the theologians of Louvain, "that we were assisted by the merits and prayers of the saints—as some *miserable wretches* have maliciously endeavoured to impute to me."

Œcolampadius, in his notes on the homilies of St. Chrysostom, declares:

"That the saints pray for us. Neither would I assert that it is an impiety and idolatry to implore their protection. The saints are inflamed with charity in heaven; they cease not to pray for us. What harm therefore is there in asking them to do that which we believe to be agreeable to God.—It is what has been done by Chrysostom and by Gregory of Nazianzum in his panegric on St. Cyprian; and what has been practised by almost all the churches in the east and west."

Am I then to be condemned for observing a practice which, according to the admission of one of the founders of Protestantism, was observed by the greatest and most venerable personages of the eastern and western churches?

But, there are other authorities still more convincing. There is the celebrated Dr. Montague, bishop of Chichester and Norwich, who, in his Antidote, page twenty, writes thus:

"I do not deny but the saints are mediators, as they are called, of prayer and intercession, but in general,

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and for all in general. They interpose with God by their supplications, and mediate by their prayers."

Again, in a treatise on the Invocation of Saints, page 103, he gives the reason of this belief:

"This," he says, "is the common voice with general concurrence, without contradiction of reverend and learned antiquity, for aught I could ever read or understand: and I see no cause or reason to dissent from them touching intercession in this kind."

Page 118: "Indeed I grant Christ is not wronged in his mediation. It is no impiety to say as they do: Holy Mary, pray for me; Holy Peter, pray for me."

Will you not consent, then, to join with me, after such authority, in invoking the saints to think of us, poor exiles, in their prayers: that we may be guided in peace to the realms of bliss which are prepared for us. O Holy Virgin! obtain, by thy intercession, that we may be for ever happy.

LETTER XXIII.

Who has not heard of Bishop Heber, and the sweet effusions which he breathed from a sacred lyre, among the fragrant bowers and lovely scenery of the east? Seldom has the genius of poetry inspired the heart of her bard with sentiments more pure, and language more

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simply beautiful, than flowed from the fresh fountains of his soul. Pathos, sublimity, elegance, and piety are blended in one deep strain, in the warblings of his lyre.

Upon the banks of Ganges' stream
The bard of Britain sung:
And echo, breathless, it would seem,
To catch each wild note of his theme
In sacred silence hung.

Now on the weeping willow's boughs
Its strings all loose and broken,
His lyre is hung—the lone wind blows
Its wail among them—and the vows
Of boys and maids are spoken,

Beneath their cool and hallowed shade,
Where oft they loved to lie,
Drinking the sounds those strings once made,
And weaving wreaths for him who played,
Of immortality.

What were the sentiments of this sweet bard and most amiable prelate of the Episcopal church, concerning the subject which we are now considering? Did he join the hoarse outcry of bigotry and prejudice? Did he profane his lyre with a spirit of rancour on this subject?

I refer you to his journal, as quoted in the Edinburgh Review, number ninety-six, December, 1828.

In concluding a letter to Miss How, who had recently lost a dear brother, he says: "And now farewell. God support, bless, and comfort you. Such as my prayers are you have them fervently and sincerely offered.

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But you have better and holier prayers than mine. That the spirits in paradise may pray for those whom they have left behind, I cannot doubt; since I cannot suppose that they cease to love us there: and your dear brother is still employed in your service, and still recommending you to the throne of mercy."

From this passage, it is plain, that Bishop Heber believed in the efficacy of the prayers of the spirits in paradise. Can you doubt it, after all the proofs I have brought forward in its vindication? Can any consistent Prostestant, who venerates the opinions of his most enlightened prelates and writers, who respects the testimony of the fathers, and the unanimous practice of all past ages, and who regards the convictions of the majority of Christians at the present day, again I ask you, can any candid Protestant condemn me, and accuse me of superstition, for praying to the saints?

Oh! myriads of celestial beings, deeply interested in your welfare, and who long to have you as a companion in their society for all eternity, are pouring forth their prayers for you. Blend yours with theirs; and while you breathe out your fervent aspirations, pray, that you may arrive at the Truth.

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RELICS.

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LETTER XXIV.

The scenery around me is calm and beautiful. 'Tis the sweet hour of twilight, when the soothing interval between day and night gives respite to the wearied bosom, and quiet to the agitated heart. I am sitting on the portico of an ancient mansion, on the banks of the ——. Tufts of trees, half lost in the dusk, lift their boughs in thick confusion, through which, ever and anon, a vista opens upon the clear stream, tinged with the sunken rays of the departed sun. The big watch-dog is fawning at the feet of his master, keeping fixed upon him his large fine eye, and almost intelligent of what is going on. The melodious notes of the mocking bird are swelling from the strained throat of the caged warbler, and mingling with the soft whisperings of the sportive zephyr.

Around the white pilasters twines the wood-bine, clustering with the sweet-briar and the wild-rose. Fragrance is sweetening the atmosphere. Your cousin is listening to the reading of her lovely little Maria Louisa—and Theodore is watching the bounding colt.

Seated in a corner, with just light enough from the reflected sun beams to see by, I snatch the present moment to write again.

Scarcely had I commenced, than your cousin, interrupting her daughter's lesson, cried out to me, as she

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drew an image from her work-basket: "I forgot to show you this picture, which is very precious."

"Whom does it represent?" I asked.

She fixed her eyes, suffused with tears, upon it—"my dear mother!" she faltered with a voice half-stifled with sobs, and kissed it.

I looked at it—returned it—she resumed her amiable occupation, and I was left again to my musings.

I thought how strange it is, that veneration is allowed, by a natural impulse, to images and relics of our friends, and yet, condemned in the Catholic, who refers it to sacred things, as superstitious. Modern polemics inveigh, with no little acrimony against this tenet: and yet it is a fact not known to many, that Luther did not separate from the pale of the ancient church, on this adopted pretext. Nor did his immediate disciples and intimate friends object to the respect which we pay to the crucifix, since Melancthon, in the frontispiece of the editions of the Reformer's works, represents him kneeling in prayer before that instrument of redemption.

Nor did the primitive heads of the church of England object to this dogma. You have read in Dr. Milner's works, that James the first reproached the Scottish bishops with the fact, that they placed in the churches the royal lions and Queen Elizabeth's devils (griffins) and refused to admit the statues of the apostles and martyrs. How will the Rev. Dr. —— of the little church answer the king's strong argument? Do you

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think he will attempt to do so? I certainly cannot be accused of illiberality when I array Protestant against Protestant. You surely will acquit me of any intention of uttering a syllable that might be offensive to thousands, who, though not within the communion of our church, may be sincere in their convictions, and disposed to embrace the truth, if they discover it, at any peril. You are among these.—God bless you, and direct you.

LETTER XXV.

'Tis said, full often, that before
His wooden God the papist bows,
And muttering his senseless vows,
He loves some image to adore:

"Blinded idolater!" exclaims
Some voice oracular and deep!
Old men groan forth—old matrons weep,—
We laugh at such nick names.

"Papists," "Romanists," and similar misnomers, seem now to be the titles by which the conscientious members of the ancient church are designated. Pitiful invention! In England, in former times of intolerance, this artifice might have produced its effect;—but in a free country, and an enlightened and liberal age, it is unmeaning and contemptible.

The nature of the tenet of our church regarding

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sacred images and relics has been as disingenuously misrepresented, as the members of that church are miscalled. Writers of high repute and respectable authority on other subjects, appear as ignorant on this, as the most insignificant scribblers of the age.

It is stated, that we pray to images; and adore the cross. That we believe there exists a divine efficacy in relics, by which, forgetting the Almighty giver of every good gift, we hope to derive from them blessings and graces. Have you not frequently found this assertion made with all the gravity of truth, in the course of your reading? Yes, from Archbishop Secker in England, down to the obscure "Watchman" in the United States, this silly assertion is transmitted, and continued; —until at length it has almost become a proverb in the world.

You know how to treat such aspersions, on the good sense and religious understanding of so many excellent and virtuous Catholics. You smile with pity when you hear it said that your elegant friends, the amiable, the accomplished Misses ——— are bound, as Catholics, to transfer their adoration from the great Creator, to a stock, or a stone—to a crucifix or a picture.

What, then, is the true doctrine of the church, on this point? We find it in the Council of Trent, session the twenty-fifth:

"The images of Christ, of the Virgin Mother of God, and the other saints, are to be kept and retained parti-

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cularly in the churches, and due honour and veneration to be paid them: *not that we believe in any divinity or power in them*, for which we respect them, or that any *thing is to be asked of them;* or that trust is to be placed in them, as the heathens trusted of old in their idols."

Consult the catechism in use throughout this coun try; and to the question, "are we allowed to pray to crucifixes, relics, and holy pictures?" you will discover this answer: "No, by no means; for they have no life, or sense, to hear or help us."

It is false, therefore, that we adore these memorials: it is true that we offer them a species of veneration. We have to examine, what is the character of the veneration which the church admits, and the Catholic pays to them.

After going into the investigation, I feel assured, that there are many candid, sincere, and ingenuous enough to condemn, with heartfelt emotion, the strange, but strong exertions that are now made, in the most enlightened of all countries, to keep up the wild cry of Idolatry, Romanism, Popery!

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LETTER XXVI.

I ask then, what is the character of the veneration which we pay to relics and images?

Let the church of Smyrna, in their letter to their brethren in Pontus, as recorded by Eusebius, answer the question.

"Our subtle enemy, the devil, did his utmost that we should not take away the body (of Polycarp,) as many of us anxiously wished. It was suggested that we should deny our crucified Master, and begin to worship Polycarp. Foolish men, who knew not that we never can desert Christ, who died for the salvation of all men! nor worship any other. Him we adore as the Son of God, but we show deserved respect to the martyrs, and his disciples and followers. The centurion therefore caused the body to be burnt. We then gathered his bones, more precious than pearls and more tried than gold, and buried them. In this place, God willing, we will meet, and celebrate with joy and gladness, the birth-day of this martyr, as well as the memory of those who have been crowned before, as by his example, to prepare and strengthen others for the combat!" This passage is taken from the fourth book, fifteenth chapter, of Eusebius' Ecclesiastical History. The faith of the present age, is here defined in the clearest terms, by the Christians of the second century. They were, at that early period, accused of adoring the relics of the mar-

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tyrs. The same accusation is laid to us; but we reply, in the triumphant language of those enlightened Christians: "Foolish men! we never can desert Christ—nor worship any other."

Whatever veneration, therefore, we give to relics and images, is merely relative; referred to the person represented, or of whom any memorial remains: and that veneration is entirely of an inferior character—similar to that which your amiable cousin paid to the image of her departed mother.

I contend, that this veneration is proper; is rational; is founded upon Scripture. Turn to the thirty-seventh chapter of the book of Exodus, and you will find there a description of the ark, before which Joshua prostrated himself to the ground.

"And Bezaleel made the ark of shittim wood; two cubits and a half was the length of it . . . . and he overlaid it with pure gold within and without, and made a crown of gold to it round about . . .

"And he made two cherubims of gold, beaten out of one piece made he them, on the two ends of the mercy seat, one cherub on one end of the side, and another cherub on the other end." . . .

Now, I request you to pay peculiar attention to the *images* of the cherubim, formed upon the ark; and then turn to the book of Joshua, seventh chapter and sixth verse, and see how that prophet, who understood the nature of idolatry better than those who now ob-

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ject to paying respect to images and relics, observe, I entreat you, how that holy man bowed before the cherubim of the ark:

"And Joshua rent his clothes, and fell to the earth upon his face before the ark of the Lord until eventide; he and the elders of Israel; and put dust upon their heads."

I presume no one will accuse Joshua and the elders, of having fallen into idolatry because they prostrated themselves before the ark. Upon what principle, then, are we condemned for bowing before a crucifix, or a sacred memorial, in the same spirit, and with the same motives, which influenced that venerable man!

How often have I not heard some of your intimate friends regret that Catholics could so far forget the adoration due to the Supreme Lord, as to prostrate themselves before a crucifix; and yet the precedent which I have just adduced to authorize our practice, exists, recorded and approved, in the ancient testament!

By venerating the crucifix, which brings so vividly to my mind the sufferings of Him who redeemed us, I do no more than Protestants themselves, when they venerate the bread and wine, the symbols of the body and blood of Christ. There is no one, I believe, who approaches the communion table, but feels and evinces, a high veneration for the elements containing the memorial of his passion, who is represented under them.

Why, then, may the Catholic not exhibit a proper and

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decent veneration for the crucifix, or an image representing him still more perfectly?

It is prescribed, that, at the pronunciation of the name of Jesus, every knee shall bend. Accordingly, at the sound of that venerable name, I have noticed, with no little edification, that it is customary for the more devout among our Protestant brethren, to bow their heads.

If it be lawful and proper to bow before the mere name of the Redeemer, where can there be discovered any derogation from the eternal majesty to bow before the *image* of Christ.

In London, you yourself remember, when you were introduced into the House of Lords, how those noble personages, as they entered, bent their knees to the empty throne! It then occurred to you, as stated in a very elegantly written letter, that those men at least, could with no consistency whatever, condemn the Catholic for bowing before a picture or a relic!

The most violent fanatic against the veneration of images, does not hesitate to pay external respect, to the volume of the scriptures. He will treat it with religious decorum, he will kiss it with veneration. But this same person, when he sees me treating a sacred picture, or relic, or crucifix, with precisely the same regard, affixing to them my lips, in testimony of a similar respect, this same person, will exclaim "superstition!" and will affect to pity the lamentable delusion of poor "papists!"

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We ask not their pity, we call upon them to examine our tenets, and to act consistently and fairly.

LETTER XXVII.

Whenever I entered the senate chamber in my own native city, Annapolis, I felt a reverential emotion at the reflection, that in that venerable hall, the father of our country once appeared, and that there he resigned his office of President, in order to retire to the tranquil enjoyments of his ancestral farm. And that sentiment was very much enhanced, when I cast up my eye to an ancient likeness of Washington, which hangs in the hall.

Who could look upon the image of that immortal patriot, and would not experience a sentiment of profound respect for the original, and veneration for the picture of so illustrious a man! The contemplation of such an image excites a thrilling feeling in the bosom, awakens a deep desire to imitate the example of the original, and kindles a glow of admiration for his virtues. An American youth, whose heart would not throb with the love of country, when his father points to the likeness of Washington, cannot be worthy of the liberties which were won for him.

If scepticism, itself, would shrink from the condem-

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nation of such respect towards the image of a hero and a sage, may I not be allowed the privilege, or rather may I not claim the right, to venerate the image of my Saviour, or of a saint? May I not hang up such a representation in the churches, that the faith of the Christian may be excited, his gratitude roused, his hopes invigorated, and his devotion increased!

Certainly, if the likeness of a patriot urges the heart of him who contemplates it, to a pure love of country, and the desire to emulate the civic virtues which distinguished the original, the contemplation of the likeness of the divine founder of religion must excite us to the love of our heavenly country, must stimulate us to the practice of supernatural virtues. Is not this a plain and natural deduction? Can you discover any inconsistency in the argument, any flaw in the conclusion?

> But 'tis objected, that the hand profane
> Of mortal artist dares to represent
> On canvass, what the loftiest mind in vain
> Seeks to conceive—and what was never meant
> To be depicted to the human eye:
> And what is this?—that as an aged man,
> The Papist represents the Eternal Deity!

Yes, this seems, in an especial manner, to scandalize the more devotional, and contemplative portion of our opponents. And yet, the Catholic does what he is justified in doing: he describes on canvass, what the inspired penman describes in writing. He conveys to the eye, what the sacred author traces to the mind.

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If the Eternal ever deigned to appear as an aged man, if he is described as such, by the author of a book which all denominations admit to be canonical, I contend, that there is no possible ground of complaint against the Catholic for representing Him, in that character, on canvass.

Turn to the seventh chapter of Daniel, verse the ninth, and you will read this sentence:

"I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool."

Can there be any impropriety in tracing out this idea, presented by the author of a book whence I quote the passage, in a painting, or in sculpture. If the hair of the Ancient of days is represented to my mind's eye as "like the pure wool," why cannot that hair be thus represented to my sight, by the pencil of the artist!

I am at a loss to perceive the slightest reasonable imparity in the case.—Resolve the subject seriously in your own mind, and then tell me, can you see any foundation for the objection I have answered.

LETTER XXVIII.

Would you believe, that so intelligent a young lady as Laurentia ——— could seriously ask the question, if the Catholic church does not suppress the second

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commandment? Has she ever looked into our common Catechism? Has she read our editions of the Bible? If she would take the trouble to convince herself by referring to those books, she would find, that we inculcate, with as much emphasis and zeal as she can desire, the commandment:

"Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven thing, or the likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or on the earth below, or in the waters under the earth. Thou shalt not adore them, or serve them."

Is this suppressing the commandment in question? Or can it be urged that we violate it, by having sacred pictures, statues, crucifixes, &c.? By no means; the force of the injunction does not lie in the terms: "thou shalt not make to thyself the likeness of *any thing*; otherwise the painter would be subjected to the continual violation of it. For, if we be solemnly forbidden to make the likeness of *any thing*, then it would be wrong to have the image of a parent, friend, or relation.

The meaning, then, of the first part of the commandment, is modified and must be understood, by the conclusion: "thou shalt not adore them, or serve them."

Now, as Laurentia ——— does not adore or serve the beautiful picture of her aunt which is displayed in her parlour, so I do not adore or serve the image of a saint or of the Virgin Mary, which is presented to my observation in the churches.

It may not be irrelevant to remark here, that it is not

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to the crucifix, or any painting that may hang over the altar, that we bend our knees on entering the church. You are aware, that we believe there is something in our tabernacles infinitely more deserving of our veneration. Convinced of the real presence of Christ in the eucharist, we adore *him*—and certainly he is entitled to our adoration, whether he appears arrayed in the majesty of Thabor, or is hidden in the obscurity of the elements of the bread.

On this subject, I shall write hereafter:—and, incredible as the fact may seem to thousands, I am much mistaken if I cannot adduce the most solid arguments to support its truth.

For the present, I wish to convey a clear idea of the subject now under investigation. And I pray you, when next you meet your dear Laurentia, to assure her for me, that the second commandment remains untouched, and inviolable, in the Catholic communion.

LETTER XXIX.

"There is something exceedingly disgusting, to say nothing of the absurdity of the practice, in kneeling down to the bones of dead men."

This is a sentence extracted from an essay written by a gentleman, whom the public esteem as a liberal

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and honourable scholar. The writer alludes to a subject, concerning which he manifestly entertains but a confused and ignorant idea. He means to state, in other words, that the doctrine of the Catholic church concerning the veneration of relics, is disgusting and absurd.

What is a relic?

Thou knowest,—for thy gentle mind
With graceful learning is refined:
It means a token left
By some dear friend, or saint, or sage,
Some patriot, hero, of his age,
Of whom the world is reft.

The sword which in the battle-hour
The father of his country wore,
Fighting for liberty,
Is now—when he is laid in dust,
Beheld with veneration just
By all the good and free.
It is a relic, on the shrine
Of patriotism, with sacred care
Preserved—and Freedom's flame divine
Burns in their breasts who to that shrine repair.

Then, when before the martyr's tomb
Within the ancient walls of Rome,
With reverence I kneel;
Say, who can blame the sentiments I feel?
For there the hallowed relics lie
Of the brave champions of our cause:
Heroes of Christianity—
Defenders of religion, and her laws!

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Perhaps there are many, in this wise age, who would smile, were they to be told, that I would venerate the handkerchief of St. Paul, were it possible to procure it. But they should suspend their mirth, until they turn to the nineteenth chapter and twelfth verse of the Acts of the Apostles. What will they find there recorded? Why, strange as it is, they will find that the handkerchief of St. Paul seemed to possess a miraculous virtue: certainly wonders were wrought by it.—"And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul," writes the author of the Acts.

"So that (I quote the Protestant translation) from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs and aprons, and the disease departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them."

Now, if these identic handkerchiefs and aprons could be exposed to public view in our churches, would they not claim a certain species of veneration from every Christian? Would not every believer feel it a pleasure and an honour, to be allowed to touch them? And if he could obtain a particle of them, would he not delight in preserving the *relic*, of which such extraordinary powers are recorded in the scripture?

But, as the essayist whom I quoted, in the beginning of this letter, lays peculiar stress upon venerating the bones of the dead, I would advise him to peruse, with attention, the thirteenth chapter, and twenty-first verse of the fourth book of Kings. He will read there of

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the prodigious efficacy attached to the *relics*—the bones —of the prophet Eliseus; that they, by their merely coming in contact with a dead body, effected the resuscitation to life of the deceased person thrown upon them.

"And it came to pass" (again I cite the Protestant version, *second* Kings, chap. 13. v. 21) "as they were burying a man, that behold, they spied a band of men; and they cast the man into the sepulchre of Elisha: and when the man was let down, and touched the bones of Elisha, he revived, and stood upon his feet."

I do not think there would have been any thing very disgusting or absurd, if the man, restored to life so miraculously by the *relics* of Elisha, had, in the fervour of his gratitude, knelt down to thank his God, for having conferred upon him so signal a favour, through the instrumentality of the *bones* of the deceased prophet.—And oh! could he be deemed superstitious, had he procured a fragment of those relics, enshrined it in gold or silver, kept it by him, with due veneration, and exhibited to his friends, as the instrument under Providence of his restoration to life? How would you have acted in such a case?

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LETTER XXX.

I love to go back, to long-past ages, to consult the wisdom of antiquity, on the subjects which we are discussing. There is a voice speaking from the tombs—there is an echo sounding from the vaults of the dead. When I question that voice, when I ask, was it customary, in times that have gone, to venerate relics, I am answered by a deep burst of testimony, it was!—and echo repeats—"was."

As I sit on the willow-shaded banks of a broad stream, over which the matin-zephyr is sporting, as he dips his aërial wings into the gently rippling waves, I love to consult the venerable and wise, who no longer exist save in their immortal works.

I turn over the far-famed pages of Eusebius, who is styled the father of ecclesiastical history, and I discover among his writings the following testimony:

"It is our practice to honour their (the martyrs) sepulchres, there to utter our prayers and our vows, and to venerate their blessed souls: and this we say is justly done."

Next I consult Saint Cyril of Jerusalem, and, in his eighteenth *Catechesis* on the Resurrection, he addresses me thus:

"From the fact of a dead man being raised to life by touching the body of Eliseus, we learn, that when the soul is departed, a certain virtue remains in the bodies

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of saints, and that, on account of the merit of the souls that resided in them. Of this we cannot doubt, for if the handkerchiefs and aprons, mere external appendages, cured the sick that touched them; more efficacious, we conclude, would be the body of a prophet."

Saint Cyril, in his first discourse against Julian the apostate, condemns him for not respecting the relics of the saints."

"How is it," he says, "that thou payest no respect to those, who are honoured with festivals, and by whom devils have been expelled, and infirmities cured."

Saint Ambrose, in his eighty-fifth epistle on St. Gervase and Protase, expresses himself thus:—

"Let these triumphant victims be lodged in the place, where Jesus Chris is our host: upon the altar, Him who has suffered for all: under the altar, them who have been redeemed by his death. I had intended this place for myself: for it is just that the priest should repose where the priest has so often offered sacrifice. But I yield my right to these sacred victims; it is due to martyrs."

Hear the eloquent saint Augustin, in his forty-second epistle:

"You see the illustrious chief of the greatest of empires appear as a suppliant at the tomb of the fisherman, and the head that bears the diadem humbly bowing before the remains of Peter."

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And the sublime appeal of Saint Chrysostom in his thirty-second Homily on the Epistle to the Romans.

"For myself, I admire Rome and celebrate it, not for the splendour and abundance of its wealth, not for its magnificent edifices, but for those two columns of the church which it possesses. Oh! who will give me to embrace the body of Paul . . . to cling to his sepulchre, to contemplate even the dust of his body . . . the dust, I say, of that mouth, by which Jesus Christ has spoken to us and from which came forth a light more resplendant than the sun—yes I could wish to see the tomb which encloses those weapons of justice and truth. . . . This body with that of Peter, shall always be for Rome a more sure defence, than walls or towers."

"I honour, in the body of a martyr," exclaims St. Ambrose, "the scars received for the name of Christ. I honour the memory of him, who lives eternally by his virtue. I honour the ashes become sacred by confessing the Lord. I honour in these ashes the seeds of immortality."

Can you, then, refuse to join, with so illustrious a man, in honouring the remains of the martyrs, the relics of the saints? I do not ask you to pay a blind veneration to every thing offered you as a relic. The object must be authenticated, proved: and such an object, such a relic, you could not refuse, with St. Ambrose, to honour, in the proper acceptation of the term.

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SACRED IMAGES.

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LETTER XXXI.

I have often been asked, what is the meaning of having so many lighted candles upon our altars! One of your most lovely but thoughtless friends once remarked, that they reminded her of a raree-show. I cannot see what reasonable objection there can be to the decoration of our altars, when I learn from the most authentic authority, that our Christian forefathers were accustomed to burn a number of candles, and place very gorgeous ornaments upon the altars, near which were deposited the remains of the martyrs. I will cite a few lines of excellent Latin poetry, by Saint Paulinus, descriptive of the shrine in which were laid the bones of Saint Felix.

"Aurea nunc niveis orbantur limina velis:
Clara coronantur densis altaria lychnis,
Limina ceratis adolentur odora papyris.
Nocte dieque micant; sic nox splendorque diei
Fulget, et ipsa dies cœlesti illustris honore
Plus micat, innumeris lucem geminata lucernis."

You have studied some Latin, and with the aid of your dictionary, I have no doubt that you can easily make out the meaning. I will, however, attempt to translate them:

The snow-white curtain, from the golden shrine
Is now removed; upon the altar shine
Lamps thickly placed—and waxen tapers throw

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Their mingled lights upon the shrine below.
There, day and night, they shed their glimmering ray,
Chasing the gloomy shades of night away,
And rendering still more bright the light of day.

Among the presents which the Emperor Constantine made to the shrines of Saint Peter and Saint Paul, were gorgeous candlesticks, splendid lamps, and perpetual lights to burn before the relics. When the remains of Saint Chrysostom were translated, they were carried, in great pomp, preceded by innumerable lights. This fact is recorded by Theodoret.

It is extraordinary to hear objections raised against the propriety of venerating sacred relics, by those very persons whose classic enthusiasm glows before a fragment of Roman or Grecian antiquity. I have seen the sternest sceptics weep before the statue of a pagan lady, holding in her hands the urn containing the ashes of him she loved. I have seen the most unbending enemies of our creed, musing, in deep veneration, among the tombs of Pompeii; touching, with profound respect, the time-worn marble, and entering, with a hallowed sentiment, the ruined temples of the gods.

May I not then be allowed, to kneel, with religious respect, before the tombs of the martyrs—to enter with sacred awe the dark chambers of the catacombs—to venerate the relics of the champions—the heroes—the sages—of Christianity! I leave it to your candour to answer the question. I know what will be your reply.—It is not only allowable, it is meet.

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LETTER XXXII.

You ask whether any Protestant authority can be cited, in support of the veneration of sacred images? I will show that it can: and authority, too, of the most respectable character. Take, for instance, Molanus, the oracle of Lutheranism, in the last century. He writes thus:

"It is very certain that there is no virtue in images, and, therefore, that we cannot adore them nor pray before them, but in as much as they are a visible means of exciting in us the remembrance of Christ and heavenly things. And if we would adore or invoke God before an image, we must put ourselves in the same disposition in which the Israelites were before the brazen serpent, beholding it with respect, but placing their faith not in the serpent but in God."

I agree, in every word, with the learned and candid writer. His sentiments, on this subject, are precisely mine; and those of every Catholic. Are they not, likewise, yours?

Among the ornaments of the Episcopal church, no one will deny an exalted place to the illustrious Dr. Montague. And that immortal prelate declares in his "Appeal," chapter the twenty-first, that sacred images have the virtue of producing emotions of piety, and awakening feelings of religion and devotion.

"The pictures of Christ," that I may cite his own

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words, "the blessed Virgin, and saints, may be made, had in houses, set up in churches. The Protestants use them; they despise them not. Respect and honour may be given to them: the Protestants do it, and use them for helps of piety, in rememoration, and more effectual representation, of the Prototype."

What, after this explicit acknowledgment, are we to think of those ungenerous writers of the present day, who represent it as idolatrous to have and pay honour to religious memorials? Whose authority should have more weight with a thinking mind, no matter how prejudiced—that of a modern opponent to our creed, or that of the venerable Bishop of Chester.

Again, in the contents, he lays down this proposition:

"That images may affect the minds of religious men, by representing unto them the actions of Christ and his saints: in which regard, all reverence simply cannot be abstracted from them."

Is not this quite plain, quite satisfactory?

But there is still higher authority; higher, not on account of greater learning, but of a more elevated rank, in the church of England—the authority of Archbishop Laud. In a speech, delivered in the star-chamber, on the fourteenth of June, 1637, he thus addresses the Lords of the Garter:

"I hope a poor priest may worship God with as lowly reverence as you do, since you are bound by your oath and your order, according to a constitution of Henry

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V., to give due honour to the Lord your God, and to *his altar*; (*for there is reverence due to that, too,* though such as comes far short of divine worship) and this in the manner as ecclesiastical persons both worship and do him reverence."

According to this Arch-prelate, then, there is respect due to the very altar. If the altar deserves respect, certainly the image of Christ demands the same; a relic is entitled to as much: and consequently the controversy, regarding this tenet, which has grown so violent and so clamorous, as almost to drown the voice of vindication and truth, should, in the estimation of every unprejudiced understanding, be brought to a conclusion. All should agree, since I have quoted the authority of Scripture, of the fathers, of the practise of antiquity, of the very Protestants themselves, that to venerate images and relics, in a proper manner, is not only an excusable, but a praiseworthy and religious, custom.

As for yourself, I am certain you will acquiesce in this conclusion. Truth has no obstacle to encounter in you: its rays, like those of an unclouded sun, will shine upon your convictions, and irradiate your heart.

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SIGN OF THE CROSS.

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LETTER XXXIII.

At the foot of Mount Cenis, there stands a small rustic shrine, in honour of the Virgin Mary. A rude statue of the mother of the Redeemer, bearing her Son in her arms, salutes the stranger's eye, as he enters on the precipitous ascent to the snowy mount. It seems to admonish the traveller, that the way is perilous and dreary; that there are snows everlasting piled upon the summits of Cenis, and the avalanches may fall!

As we turned the circuitous route, immediately as the shrine came in view, I observed the *Veturino*, rough and half ferocious though he seemed, making upon his forehead the sign of the cross. "Did you observe the superstition of that Italian?" said an English traveller to me, "he crosses his brow, to arm himself, I suppose, against the dangers that await us: poor creature!"

"Perhaps," I replied, "the honest, though uncouth driver, acts from a much more laudable principle, than you are aware of."

"Principle!" exclaimed he, "the man is blinded with the darkest deepest shades of ignorance, and stupid superstition."

Perceiving, from the tenor of his language, that it would be useless to reason with him, I said no more: but I thought much. I looked upon the simple act of the *Veturino*, as sublime, and eminently religious: and

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I will give you, my reasons for entertaining this conviction.

In recurring to the works of the most ancient fathers, I find that it was a custom universal among the early Christians, to sign themselves with the cross. And, I conclude therefore, that it is a religious, not a superstitious practice, observed at the present day, by the Catholic church.

"If a catechumen is asked," writes St. Augustin, in his Second Treatise on St. John—"do you believe in Christ? He replies yes; and instantly *makes the sign of the cross.* He describes it, and carries it on his forehead, and is not ashamed."

"Keep the door of your heart shut," thus advises St. Jerome, in his epistle to Demetrius—"frequently make on your forehead the sign of the cross, that the exterminator of Egypt may have no hold upon you."

"The sign of the cross," says St. Ambrose, "is on our foreheads, and in our hearts, on the foreheads to confess him always, in our hearts to love him—we ought, on waking, to give thanks to Christ, and to begin the labours of the day with the sign of our Saviour.

"Whenever we move," Tertullian observes, in his Treatise on the Soldier's Crown, chapters third and fourth, "when we enter and go out: in dressing: in washing: at table: when we retire to rest: during conversation—we impress on our foreheads the sign of the cross!"

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Was not the Veturino authorized then, to make the sign of the cross, as he commenced his arduous journey up the fearful steep!

"Everywhere," exclaims the eloquent Chrysostom, "the cross is displayed; everywhere is it honoured. In the houses, in the public places, in the deserts, on the ways, on the mountains and hills, in the valleys, on the seas and vessels, on our habits, arms, vessels of gold and silver, on the paintings of our walls. We are far from being ashamed of the cross."

"Protect yourself," says Saint Ephrem in his Treatise on the Spiritual Armour, "with the sign of the cross, as with a shield: and this not only with your hand, but with your mind. Employ it in your studies, in going out, in returning home, when retiring to rest, and on rising in the morning; bless the places where you walk by this sign, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

"Be not ashamed of the cross," Saint Cyril thus addresses his catechumens, "If any one conceal it, do you make it openly on your forehead—eating, drinking, entering or leaving your houses, or retiring to rest, when rising up, make with confidence the sign of the cross upon your forehead."

"At the hour of prayer," says Saint Justin, (Quæstion. 118,) we turn towards the east, and immediately with our right hand, we sign ourselves in the name of Christ, with the sign which is so necessary for us."

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Judge, now, whether the Italian was as superstitious as the Englishman deemed him to be. Read over and over the passages I have cited from the primitive writers, and then see which of all the now existing churches has preserved the venerable custom of making the sign of the cross.

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PURGATORY.

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LETTER XXXIV.

From the journals of the day, I learn that the funeral ceremonies which engrossed the interest and attention of your capital, were grand and solemn. The tolling of bells, and beating of drums, and firing of cannons, were the awful heralds to the public of the departure from this scene of agitation, of a lamented Patriot.

> The pageant's o'er, at length—and still
> The deep tones of the solemn bell:
> The dirge is sung—the exciting thrill
> Of martial music hushed—the knell
> Hath passed away upon the breeze;
> The death-flag streaming on the seas
> Is furled—thus every light shall set in gloom,
> And sage and hero follow to the tomb.

A great writer has remarked, that, at the hour of death, he would rather be an obscure and pious peasant, than a distinguished and impious philosopher. There is a fund of wisdom in the observation. The hero, whose death has just filled our whole continent with mourning is less enviable in the last hour, than the unknown saint, who has lived in silence, and died in the arms of peace and religion.

I am led, by this train of meditation, to the consideration of purgatory. I may be pitied for associating this unpopular topic with the idea of the obsequies of a philosopher; but, perhaps after we shall have examined

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the grounds on which this tenet is established, you, at least, will acknowledge, that even purgatory is not without its philosophy.

I am aware, that very popular writers have represented this doctrine as the invention of the priesthood, for mercenary ends: as a perpetual source of wealth, extorted from the superstitions and fears of the credulous; and the most baseless and corrupt of all the errors of Popery. Suspend your judgment until you read these letters on the subject.

LETTER XXXV.

Tell me, then, is it true indeed,
That there is nothing in our creed
More groundless, more unscriptural
Than purgatory? are we all
Who candidly believe we find
Authority of every kind
Supporting proving it, still lost
In ignorance, from error tost
To error, from one foaming surge
Upon another! has the scourge
Of angry heaven deprived our reason
Of all its light—or is it treason
To adhere to past and saintly ages—
Or for ourselves to explain the pages
Of holy writ; (a right which they
Who blame us most, will hardly say
We are nor like the rest of men

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Entitled to) why hear we, then,
Such uproar, angry opposition,
When we defend this proposition:
"There is a middle place?"—we'll see
If solid argument there be
This tenet to substantiate
Which has been so much scoffed, of late.

Yes, we will enter upon this investigation, with the pure desire of ascertaining the character of the grounds on which it is based. We will convince ourselves of the truth or falsehood of the proposition, not by vituperating it, but by discussing the topic.

Is there, then, any Scriptural authority for the doctrine of purgatory, and praying for the dead? I assert that there is.—Turn to the second Book of Maccabees, chapter the twelfth, verses 43, 44, and 46, and you will read the following texts:

"And making a gathering he sent twelve thousand drachms of silver to Jerusalem, for sacrifice to be offered for the sins of the dead—for if he had not hoped that they that were slain should rise again, it would have seemed superfluous and vain to pray for the dead. It is therefore a holy and a wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from sins."

If these books form an integral part of the inspired Scriptures, then the controversy is for ever settled. For, the language is as plain as it can possibly be: it is beyond the possibility of misconstruction or distortion.

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The question, therefore, is resolved, to this point: are the books of Maccabees a portion of the divine Scriptures—or are they apocryphal?

I contend, that they are as divinely inspired as any other portion of the ancient Testament; as the Book of Genesis, or the Canticle of Canticles.

Protestants reject them as uncanonical: how, then, are we to decide whether or not they be the word of God? Whether or not they be entitled to our veneration, as any other part of the Scriptures? Certainly not by appealing to modern criticism: for, there are as many—to say the least—as learned, and grave, and religious, who claim these books as divine, as there are who reject them. We must recur to the authority of the ancients; and if we find that the primitive fathers of the church admitted them, we certainly must not rashly assert that they are not authentic, that they are apocryphal.

The third council of Carthage declares:

"These are the truths which our fathers taught us to read in the church, under the title of DIVINE and CANONICAL Scriptures."

St. Augustin, in his treatise on the doctrine of Christ, chapter the eighth, places these books in the canon of the Scriptures, and quotes them in writing against the heretics of his times.

They are ranked among the Holy Scriptures by In-

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nocent I. in his reply to Exuperius, in 405: and by Gelasius, book first, *On the Care of the Dead*, in 494.

Of course I have sufficient authority on which to rest the authenticity of these books: and, consequently, no man has the least right to condemn me for believing the doctrine, which they inculcate, of praying for the dead.

At any rate, the authority of the Books of Maccabees must be great, even with those who bind them up in the same volume with the Holy Scriptures. In all the ancient editions of the Bible these books are to be found contained—merely entitled *apocryphal*:—that is to say, not of divine authority.

But, as a history, who will question their respectability, and veracity? Now, they testify, that it was customary for the Jews, at that time the people of God, to pray for the dead. That Judas Maccabeus, a most valiant man, an enlightened follower of the customs of his religion and nation, was accustomed to pray for the dead: that he sent money to the temple for the purpose of having sacrifices offered for the dead: that it is a good and wholesome thought to pray for the dead: and, consequently, that it was a tenet inspired by the Almighty himself—and therefore true: for what was once true, must continue true for ever. Truth is unchangeable, and, therefore, if in the days of Judas it was a wholesome practise to pray for the dead, it must be so now;—and, it follows, that the church which

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teaches this truth is the true one. The Catholic church alone teaches it: draw your conclusion.

Josephus, in his "Wars of the Jews," chapter ninety-one, clearly indicates the ancient custom of his nation, when he states, that the Jews did not pray for those who had committed suicide. From which we manifestly gather, that they prayed for those who did not. Let those who ridicule purgatory reflect on this, and, I am much mistaken, if they will not cease their pleasantry.

LETTER XXXVI.

It is a remarkable fact, that while our Saviour was in the habit of condemning the superstitions into which some of the Jews had fallen, we do not find the most distant allusion to their custom of praying for the dead. But, if it was a custom not authorized by the Scriptures, he, undoubtedly, would have expressed his disapprobation of it. And, if the old adage, "Silence gives consent," be true, it is certain that he consented to, and consequently approved of, the system which I am now defending.

Nay, there can be alleged texts, from which this doctrine naturally flows: for instance, the thirty-second verse of the twelfth chapter of Saint Matthew, our Saviour expressly says:

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"And whosoever speaketh against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, nor in the world to come."

It follows, that, if that particular sin cannot be forgiven in this world or the world to come, other sins may be forgiven in the world to come. But there is no sin in heaven—and in hell there can be no forgiveness—consequently there must exist a middle place—a purgatory—I care not by what name it is designated—where sins may be forgiven.

Again, Saint Paul, who was divinely inspired, has left a text, in which this doctrine seems to be implied. Writing to the Corinthians, in his first Epistle, chapter xv, verse 29, (I quote the Protestant Bible,) he expresses himself thus:

"Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead?"

Although this text be very obscure in its general import, still it elucidates the fact, that some ceremonies were performed for the dead, in reference to their happy resurrection: and, grounding my interpretation on the conjoint authority of the earliest fathers of the church, I have a right to deduce from it the doctrine of praying for the dead—of the existence of purgatory.

That I may not make an assertion without substan-

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tiating it, I will bring forward some passages from the primitive writers, in vindication of this point.

Saint Cyprian, in his ninth Epistle, writes thus:

Our predecessors prudently advised that no brother, departing this life, should nominate any churchman his executor, and should he do it, that no oblation should be made for him: no sacrifice offered for his repose."

Here is a specified case in which no sacrifice is to be offered: consequently in other cases, sacrifices might be offered for the repose of the departed.

Saint Chrysostom assures us, that this tenet was ordained by the Apostles themselves. To quote his own words:

"It was ordained by the Apostles, that in celebrating the Sacred Mysteries, the dead should be remembered; for they well knew what advantage would be thence derived to them." This passage is taken from his sixty-ninth Homily to the people of Antioch.

Saint Augustine, in his 172d Sermon, has left the following eloquent passage:

"Funeral pomp, the crowds that follow, sumptuous expenditure in the structure of mausoleums, without being of the smallest service to the dead, may afford some consolation to the living. But it cannot be doubted, that, by the prayers of the Holy Church, and by the salutary sacrifice, and by alms which are given for the repose of their souls, the dead are helped, so that God may treat them more mercifully than their sins

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deserved. This the whole Church observes, which it received from the tradition of the fathers, to pray for those who died in the communion of the body and blood of Christ, when, in their turn, they are commemorated at the sacrifice, and it is announced that the sacrifice is offered for them."

Saint Isidore, in his book on divine offices, chapter fifteenth, writes thus:

"Since the oblation of sacrifice and prayer for the repose of the departed are made in the church throughout the world, we believe that the apostles left us this custom. For the church every where observes it; and it is certain, that if she did not believe that the faithful could obtain pardon for their sins, she would not give alms for the relief of their souls, and would not offer sacrifice to God for them."

Thus does it appear incontrovertible, that this custom was universal throughout the church in the primitive ages, at a time when according to the admission of our very opponents, religion was incorrupt and pure.

Am I, then, blinded by superstition, when I believe with the first Christians? when I offer sacrifices and oblations, as they did, for the repose of the departed? You will decide; and your own wisdom and candour will direct you in the result.

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LETTER XXXVII.

As I entered the cemetery, near Bologna, dalled *La Certosa*, which, for the beauty of its situation, and splendour of its monuments, hardly yields to the famous *Pere la Chaise*, I perceived, kneeling at the side of a superb mausoleum, a pious monk, who had come down from the monastery perched upon the top of the mountain, to offer his prayers for the repose of the deceased, whose remains lay there interred.

A stranger suddenly passed me, and taking me, from the language which he heard me speaking, to be an English Protestant: "you perceive there," he said, pointing to the discalceate friar, "a specimen of the Romish church. That ignorant being thinks that his prayers will avail the departed." With this, he was called away by his companion, who seemed in a hurry to enter a subterraneous chapel, which was opened by a lay-brother of the order of St. Bruno—and left me to my own reflections, as I fixed my eye attentively on the humble suppliant.

Since I have commenced with you the calm investigation of these matters, I have often thought of the monk of the *Certosa*, and the remark of the stranger. I know not of what denomination the latter was, but certain I am, that the custom which he identified with superstition was considered as religious, by the father of the Reformation, and some of the most learned wri-

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ters of the Protestant church. It is curious to find Luther expressing himself in the following terms:

"As for me, who believe strongly, I might even venture to say more, who know that purgatory exists, I can readily be persuaded that it is mentioned in the Scriptures. All that I know of purgatory is, that souls are there in a state of suffering, and may be relieved by our works and prayers."

Calvin himself, while he opposes the Catholic church with unsparing satire, acknowledges that it was "more than thirteen hundred years since it became the custom to pray for the dead." (Institut. book 2, chap. 5.)

Molanus affirmed, as Bossuet testifies, that one portion of the Lutherans not only approves, but practises this kind of prayer. This we find in the posthumous works of the Bishop of Meaux, vol. first, page 90, "and this is a remnant," observes that immortal writer, "of those ancient sentiments which we honour in Lutheranism."

From the testimony of the Lutherans, I pass, to that of some of the lights of the Church of England. "What!" perhaps you may exclaim, "is it possible that any one belonging to the Protestant church can have written in favour of a dogma, which all modern Protestants seem determined to reject?"

Yes, it is a fact, which deserves to be for ever remembered. Bishop Forbes was a strong advocate of

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this doctrine. He has composed a discourse on Purgatory, in which he has left the following passage:

"Let not the ancient practice of praying and making oblations for the dead, received throughout the universal church of Christ, almost from the very time of the Apostles, be any more rejected by Protestants as unlawful or vain. Let them reverence the judgment of the primitive church, and admit a practice strengthened by the uninterrupted profession of so many ages: and let them, as well in public as in private, observe this rite, ... as lawful and likewise profitable, and as always approved by the universal church; that, by this means, at length, a peace so earnestly desired by all learned and honest men, may be restored to the Christian world."

In another place he adds:

"So we may maintain the prayers of the church for the souls departed, to be beneficial, and not in vain: inasmuch as that practice of the church, of praying for the dead, is derived, as Chrysostom confesses, and is very probable, from the institution of the apostles."

Is not this satisfactory? and when we hear other theologians of the same church condemning this dogma, as false and anti-scriptural, let us not forget Bishop Forbes.

There are others, who are not less explicit on this subject, whose authority I will cite in my next letter: meanwhile, reflect upon what I have adduced, and judge for yourself.

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LETTER XXXVIII.

With sacred awe, and solemn dread,
I love to muse alone,
To read the record on the stone,
And hold communion with the dead.
Yes, by the torch's glimmering light,
Do I remember well,
I strayed, at Rouen, in the silent night,
Through the vast aisles, from cell to cell,
Where Rollo, and where William sleep,
In sculptured mausoleums, dark and deep.

There is, to my taste, something most awfully interesting in the epitaphs recorded on the tombs of the departed. They seem their last legacy to the world—they are the eternal farewell to this transitory life, especially when those epitaphs were composed by the persons whose mortal remains lie buried under the stone.

In the course of my reading, I have discovered two epitaphs of great importance: both of which were written for their own tombstones, by two enlightened Protestant divines of the highest standing; and which bear testimony of their belief in the efficacy of prayer for the dead.

EPITAPH OF BISHOP BARROW.

"The remains of Isaac, Bishop of St. Asaph's, deposited in the hands of the Lord, in the hope of a joy-

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ful resurrection solely by the merits of Christ. O all ye that pass by into the house of the Lord, the house of prayer, pray for your fellow servant, that he may find mercy in the day of the Lord."

Who, after perusing this, will doubt of the convictions of Isaac Barrow, on the subject in question? He recommended his departed spirit to the prayers of all who should enter into the church in which he is buried.

EPITAPH OF THORNDIKE.

"Here lies the body of Herbert Thorndike, formerly a prebendary of this collegiate church, (Westminster,) who in his life time endeavoured, by prayer and study, to discover the right method of reforming the church. Do you, reader, implore for him rest and a happy resurrection in Christ."

Of course this eminent man was convinced that the prayers of the living would contribute to the object for which he requested them, viz. to obtain rest for his soul, and a happy resurrection for his body.

When, therefore, the Catholic, seriously impressed with the sentiments recorded by the celebrated personages just cited, kneels in silent prayer before the grave of a departed friend, and while the tear of sorrow drops from his eye, and his heart heaves forth its deepest supplications, you will not condemn him: you will rather commend him for his pious remembrance, and with him, sigh: "may the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace."

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LETTER XXXIX.

Saint Augustine was a firm believer in the doctrine of purgatory. You have read, in his confessions, the history of his conversion from Manicheism to Catholicity—and you have felt a lively sympathy, when he records the prayers and tears of his mother, Saint Monica. After her death, he relates how, at the altar, he remembered the soul of her, who had brought him forth to the world, and to the truth. Consult his confessions, book the ninth, chapter thirteenth.

If we have to render an account for every idle word, where is the man, who can hope to be perfectly innocent, when he appears before the tribunal of God? and yet this is an inspired fact: Saint Matthew distinctly states it, in his twelfth chapter, and sixth verse.

An idle word, unrepented for, defiles the soul, and consequently excludes it from the regions of purity. It is not, however, so grievous as to condemn its victim to eternal perdition. What, then, will become of the soul in such a condition? must it not be doomed, for a time, to a place of purgation, a middle state, in which it will remain until rendered worthy to be admitted into heaven.

It is not essential to know what is the character of punishments to be endured in purgatory. Nor is it of material importance, by what name that middle place may be designated. I contend for *essentials* merely,

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not for questions which cannot be determined. Whether the soul, in a temporary separation from heaven, will suffer the torture of fire; or whether the punishment will consist merely of being deprived of the presence of Him, for whom it will pant with inextinguishable ardour, is not decided: we are free to believe either position. The existence of a middle place must be admitted. Indeed, after the arguments I have laid before you, it seems no longer controvertible. For, as you have seen, it is proved by Scripture; by the testimony of the earliest writers; and by the acknowledgment of some of the ablest Protestant divines.—What more can we require?

Then, when some dear and bosom friend,
  By death is torn away;
Go, over his lonely ashes bend,
  And for his spirit pray:
Yea, sigh thy fervent vows to heaven,
That every venial stain may be forgiven.

What, though the cold philosophy
  Of this most heartless earth,
Would seek to hush the bursting sigh,
  Or turn it into mirth;
Religion will approve thy prayers,
And consecrate thy monumental tears.

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CONFESSION.

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LETTER XL.

One of the most difficult points of the Catholic religion, is the subject of confession. For here commences the practical part, here begins the warfare against nature; the struggle against pride, the victory over one's self.—To believe in the speculative articles of the creed, demands only the conviction of the mind. To carry that belief into effect, requires a triumphant exertion of the whole man: and hence, since confession of sins is so totally repugnant to the nature of our being, we find every effort made to deny its necessity, and even question is utility.

To many, it would appear impossible that this topic could be defended. By thousands, it is considered an invention of the dark ages, for the purpose of acquiring an unlimited influence, on the part of the clergy, over the people: and more especially yet, to procure money from the deluded victims of their domination.

If this were the case, confession, would, indeed, be an abomination: and far from attempting to vindicate it, I, as a sincere and honourable man, would be obliged to condemn it. But, instead of being an invention of the dark ages, it is a divine institution, descending from the days of the Apostles down to the era of our own existence.

How often have you not read, in works of a very popular character, that the Catholic may purchase absolution; that, no matter what sins he may be guilty

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of, he need only run to the priest, with a handful of money, and he will immediately obtain absolution. Nay, he will be encouraged to relapse into the same, and even more enormous, sins, with the hope that he will soon return, with a larger sum of money, to purchase a second absolution.

I remember you once brought me an extract from a book with a very plausible title, "The Taxes of the Roman Chancery," in which a certain specified amount is attached to every kind of sin, for murder, so much, for stealing, so much—and so on, with the whole catalogue of abominations. This specious work is quoted by Guthrie in his Geography, and by almost every scribbler from his day down to a certain "Watchman" of the present period.

You asked me whether this pretended work was authentic; and, you know well, what reply I made. You know, I asserted, and I did so, not without the gravest authority, that this is a spurious composition—and that as often as it was republished in Germany and England, so often was it condemned at Rome. If, therefore, it has been scathed by the very lightnings of the Vatican, it manifestly is of no authority—it is a *triste bidental*, —and it is imposing upon the ignorance of the people, to palm it upon the public, as an authentic register of penitential statistics!

The genuine doctrine of our church is this: that the minister of penance, deriving his authority and power

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of God, can absolve the sinner, if he be truly penitent. But, if he have not the necessary dispositions—absolution would be of no avail—confession would be but a mockery.

The priest is, of his own nature, like every other man, —frail, peccable, and helpless: but, he is invested by the Omnipotent with a delegated power, which he can and must exercise. But, that power will ever prove ineffectual, if the person over whom he exerts it, be not properly disposed to profit by it. For, it is manifest, that the priest cannot forgive one whom the Almighty himself cannot pardon: and the Almighty cannot pardon a sinner who feels no sorrow for his past iniquities, and is determined to persist in the commission of them for the future.

In order the more clearly to explain myself, and elucidate the subject, take two persons as examples, the one a Protestant, the other a Catholic. Suppose them to be of the same age, equally instructed and educated. Both, in looking over their past career, see much for which they must repent: both have sinned, and, we suppose, grievously: and both are sincerely desirous to reconcile themselves with their heavenly Father, whom they have offended. In the estimation of the Protestant, what would the former have to undergo, what course would he be obliged to pursue, in order to obtain pardon?

First, he must necessarily repent, in the amaritude

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of his heart, for his transgressions. Secondly, he should resolve to avoid, as far as he can, the sins, and circumstances which led him to the sins, committed. Thirdly, he must have recourse to fervent and humble prayer, that God would be pleased, by his great mercy, to efface his iniquities, and receive back the penitent, like the prodigal, into his favour and his arms. With these due dispositions, according to the universally admitted principles of all dissenting denominations, the sincere penitent is pardoned—his sins are forgiven.

Well, in the Catholic, precisely the same dispositions are, indispensably, necessary: and without them, confession would be useless, void. The Catholic must repent from the bottom of his heart: he must resolve to avoid the sins committed, and the circumstances which led to them. He must recommend himself, in the most humble and fervent manner, to God: and, of course, were he to do nothing more, he has as much right to forgiveness, as the Protestant can claim. Were he to stop here, he would, according to the general belief, have done enough—his iniquities would be washed away. But, according to our church, he must go still farther. To all these sincere and necessary dispositions, he must add the confession of his sins; and, consequently, he does more than the Protestant. He, therefore, has another claim to pardon.

Without these preliminary dispositions, you must understand, confession, far from being beneficial, would

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be another sin. It would be a profanation. For, it can not be seriously believed, that the Catholic can dupe his own conscience, and blind his own reason, so far as to rest satisfied with the mere enumeration to his confessor of a dark catalogue of crimes. He cannot be so recklessly stupid, as to flatter his passions that the priest can forgive what the Almighty himself cannot pardon. You, I am aware, are adorned with too lofty a mind, to entertain the smallest misgiving against your neighbour—because he is a Catholic. Where will you find a purer heart, a more gentle spirit, a more brilliant pattern of the sweetest and loveliest virtues, than in the person of your bosom friend Aurelia? and Aurelia is a Catholic. Cultivate her friendship: converse freely on these subjects with her—ask her to pray for you, when she kneels at her shrine, and offers her orisons to Heaven.

LETTER XLI.

Yes, by confessing, the Catholic penitent evinces the most unequivocal testimonial of humility and sincerity. For, deem it not a matter of mere form: it is a serious thing to rehearse to a fellow man the sins, the frailties, the propensities, of the inmost heart. And I am persuaded that were confession not *required* by the institution of Christ himself, no one could ever be induced to practice it.

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"What!" thus Mirandula exclaims,
"Can it be possibly required?
Show me, on what authority inspired,
The Papist rest his claims.
Persuaded I can never be,
That man should humbly bend his knee
Before his fellow man,
And whisper to his anxious ear,
Each thought, each word, each wish, each fear.
Confess to God, who will and can
In silence wipe away each stain;
Confession to the priest is vain."

So sings Mirandula, in rather a strange lay: having little claim to pure poetry or sound reason. In brief prose, her objection is resolved to this. It cannot be required of man to reveal his sins to his fellow men. Why? Because it is too humiliating: this argument may be soothing to human nature, but it is destitute of logic.

The whole system of Christian morality is in direct opposition to the nature of men: and the fact of a system so contrary to all our propensities being admitted, and practised by all nations, proves the divinity of its character: and I contend, that, from the very aversion which we all feel to the practice of confession which prostrates the pride of the heart to the dust, a strong argument is derived in favour of the divine origin of the institution.

"Would man forge fetters for himself to wear?"

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Believe me, if there were not some positive command, issued by the Redeemer himself, and recorded in the Holy Scriptures, no Christian would be so infatuated as to yield to the invention of fanaticism; no honourable man would submit to a scheme of degrading speculation on the part of an interested portion of the community. There is a positive command, and I will adduce it in its proper place.

LETTER XLII.

The night is lovely on the banks of the ——. Over the fresh waters, glistening here and there in the beams, the silvery car of Diana ascends, while the Genius of the night, from his magic urn, sheds his dew, freshness, and fragrance upon the bosom of the river. The hour is beauteous.—Around me all is stillness, save where the whippoorwill complains in darkly solitude, or the owl screeches in his kindred shades.

As I muse upon the spectacle, oh! how many soothing associations crowd upon my memory, take possession of all the sensibilities of my heart!

I thank you for the description of that delicious excursion which you made on the Hudson, in company with a clergyman, with whom you had leisure to commune on subjects which are ever interesting; to contemplate the grandeur, beauty, and magnificence of

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the scenery, on that splendid river, and to blend your sympathetic impressions of the majesty of the Creator, and of the necessity of adoring and serving him in the manner most acceptable to his attributes. I, once, wrote a sonnet on the Hudson, which you are welcome to peruse:

Oh! seldom shone upon the Hudson's stream
A more enchanting evening:—every beam
Of the most beauteous sun-set, meek and calm,
Melted away in hyacinthine hues:
While from the bank, cool zephyr stole the balm
Of every blooming thing;—pleased to diffuse
The spirit of perfume about the deck.
Then hill on hill—on mountain mountain rose,
Till on the vision, Catskill seemed a speck,
And the deep shades fell from the "nest of crows."
I gazed—when starting in majestic flight,
Free as the winds he cleaved, an eagle soared,
And towering nobly o'er the mountain's height,
Streamed like our own proud flag aloft—the desert's Lord.

You, perhaps, may call to your recollection an observation I made, when we once found ourselves hemmed round on the waters, by hills and rocks, without any visible aperture through which to proceed. "It is thus," said I, "we are surrounded with dangers in this world, and we require a skilful pilot to steer our way in safety to the port of eternity."

"A confessor," you observed, "if discreet and wise, must be an excellent pilot to the soul, through the perils of temptation."

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"True," I returned, "For, he not only can prescribe the proper course, but can absolve you from past irregularities." A gentleman standing by, overhearing the remark, with much politeness of manner, but evident reluctance to suppress his emotion, begged me to inform him whether man can forgive sins?

"Of himself," I answered, "man cannot forgive sins. The nature of man is the same in every human being: in all it is frail, peccable, aud depraved."

"But, sir," rejoined the stranger, begging to be excused for urging the subject, "does not the Roman Catholic believe that his sins may be forgiven by the priests? In other words, does he not believe that the priests can forgive sins?"

I explained the matter thus:

"The Catholic bélieves that God has given the power to priests to absolve those who confess their sins with the necessary dispositions. The confessor is, in a spiritual sense, what the judge is in a civic point of view —the latter is constituted of the same frail and human propensities as the former: he may, to-morrow, be guilty of the very crime against which, to-day, he pronounces the sentence of the law: and yet, guilty as he is liable to become, and imperfect as he may be, his country has impowered him to adjudicate, decide, pronounce sentence, inflict punishment, or to release, acquit, absolve.

"The case is the same with regard to the former: he may, in the presence of an Omniscient Providence,

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be infinitely more guilty than the sinner who kneels at his tribunal, confesses, and implores pardon. And yet, there is conferred on him by the church, who derives it from God, the power of releasing and absolving; of loosing and binding."

The gentleman at first seemed a little silenced, on the subject, but, after a few moments of rumination, "the Catholics," he remarked, "are the only denomination who admit that the power of forgiving sin was ever conferred on man."

I observed that he was mistaken. "All those Christians who admit the efficacy of baptism, must and do, at the same time, admit, in the minister, the power to wash away original sin by the waters of regeneration." "Now," I argued, "if a minister, by the application of water, and the pronunciation of certain words, can efface original sin, why could not an equal power be conferred by Him who is omnipotent, by the pronunciation of a special form of words, to efface the stain of actual sin? Certainly, if God can make use of man as his agent and minister, in one instance, he might do it in the other. The question is, has he done so? The Catholic contends that he has: and we insist that it is the conscientious duty of all who differ from us to examine the grounds on which our doctrine is established. For, if such power has been conferred on the priest, then the church which teaches this truth contains, within her her pale, a tribunal, before which the seared heart may

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pour out its contrition and be healed—the lacerated conscience may find a balm, more soothing than that of Gideon—and the wounds of the soul may receive the oil of peace and health, more fragrant than that which streamed down the beard of Aaron."

My explanation appeared reasonable to the stranger —was it not satisfactory to you? You assured me that you would expect, with impatient anxiety, the proof which I promised to send you, that the Redeemer did impart to the Apostles and their successors the power of absolving.—In the following letter, I will comply with that promise.

It is nearly midnight—my lamp is dim—the breeze is rustling through the forest.

LETTER XLIII.

In order to obtain the pardon of his sins, the Catholic believes that three conditions are necessary, when they can be had: but, that *one* is, at all times, and under all circumstances, indispensable. In other words, he believes that penance is composed of three parts, viz. contrition, confession, satisfaction: contrition always necessary; confession and satisfaction when practicable.

With regard to the first, all Christians agree. In this there is no difference of opinion, no matter how

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wide and deep the chasm that may separate them in other respects. We too, believe, that confession would be utterly useless, and that there can be no real satisfaction, where there is not contrition or sorrow. The heart must undergo a thorough change, the will must be purified, and all the faculties of the soul sublimated by repentance, the love of God, and deep hatred of sin. Without this, the Almighty could not forgive us, much less the priest.

The question, then, is concerning the second—confession; which we will now examine.

Let us first have recourse to Scripture, and see if we can discover any texts, from which the necessity of confession can be proved. Refer to the twentieth chapter of Saint John, verses twenty-one, twenty-two, and twenty-three. I will cite the Protestant translation:

"Then Jesus said to them again: peace be with you, as my Father hath sent me, even so I send you.

"And when he said this he breathed on them, and saith to them: Receive ye the Holy Ghost:

" Whosesoever sins ye remit they are remitted unto them; and whosesoever sins ye retain they are retained."

Here it evidently appears, that the Apostles received the power to forgive sins. This is claimed not only by Catholic divines, it is admitted by Chillingworth, in terms which should be engraven on brass. Treating on this text he says:

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"Can any man be so unreasonable as to imagine, that, when our Saviour, in so solemn a manner, having first breathed upon his disciples, thereby conveying and insinuating the Holy Ghost into their hearts, renewed unto them, or rather confirmed that glorious commission, &c. whereby he delegated to them an authority of binding and loosing sins upon earth, &c. can any one think, I say, so unworthily of our Saviour, as to esteem these words of his for no better than compliment?"

"Therefore, in obedience to his gracious will, and as I am warranted and enjoined by my holy mother the Church of England, I beseech you, that, by your practice and uses you will not suffer that commission which Christ hath given to his ministers, to be a vain form of words, without any sense under them. When you find yourselves charged and oppressed, &c., have recourse to your spiritual physician, and fully disclose the nature and malignity of your disease, and come not to him only with such a mind as you would go to a learned man, as one that can speak comfortable things to you; but as to one *that hath authority* delegated to him from God himself, TO ABSOLVE and ACQUIT YOU OF YOUR SINS."

This passage is taken from his Seventh Sermon on Religion, pages 408 and 409.

It is very remarkable, that this acute writer meets the objection you have heard so often made: that the priest may counsel and direct the penitent, but that he

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cannot absolve him. Chillingworth expressly asserts, that the minister of penance hath authority to ABSOLVE AND ACQUIT OF SINS.

Turn next to the gospel of St. Matthew, sixteenth chapter and eighteenth and nineteenth verses:

"And I say also unto thee that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it: And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

Upon this text the Lutherans establish their doctrine, in common with ours, that absolution is a sacrament, and particular absolution is to be retained in confession. This appears from the Confession of Augsburgh, articles eleven, twelve, thirteen.

The same is contained in the eighteenth chapter and eighteenth verse of the same gospel.

"Verily I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven.

Again, the acts of the Apostles inform us that the first Christians declared their deeds. See the nineteenth chapter, and eighteenth verse:

"And many that believed came, and confessed, and showed their deeds."

St. James, in his Epistle, fifth chapter, and sixteenth

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verse, exhorts us to confess to one another. There certainly, then, can be no impropriety, on the contrary it is required, to confess to the ministers of religion.

"Confess your faults to one another," he writes, "and pray for one another, that ye may be healed."

Lastly, Saint John, in his first epistle, chapter first, verse the ninth, declares:

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

Although it may be urged that these two last cited texts do not, unequivocally, prove the necessity of auricular confession, still, no one can condemn me, if, interpreting them according to the wisest and gravest commentators, ancient and modern, I derive such necessity from them. Otherwise, the privilege, vindicated by all the eloquence of Prostestantism, perishes. I mean that of private interpretation.

I leave thee, then, to ponder o'er,
At leisure in thy solitude,
These sacred texts, which ne'er before,
Perhaps, by thee were understood:
But candour dwells within thy heart;
The love of truth illumes thy mind:
When truth her lustre deigns to impart,
Dark prejudice is left behind

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LETTER XLIV.

"It is ludicrous," I once heard a man of some repute for wisdom say,—"it is ludicrous, in the extreme, to see the Catholic running to confession, as if that practice were founded on scripture, or authorized by the primitive writers!"

You may conceive how little impression such language could make upon me, who had convinced myself, after the closest investigation, that it is an injunction emanating from the founder of Christianity, and recorded in the earliest monuments of ecclesiastical history.

I have, within my reach, the authentic testimonies of the primitive fathers of the church: and I will quote some passages from them, which will convince you that nothing is more holy, nothing more venerable than the practice, so much decried by modern fanaticism, of auricular confession.

First then, Saint Athanasius, a Greek father, in the first volume of his works, page 990, writes thus:

"If your bonds are not broken, surrender yourselves to the disciples of Jesus Christ; they are ready to set you free by the power they have received from our Saviour . . . . . we all labour under our respective vices: we all stand in need of being healed by our Saviour, and *of the assistance of his ministers*, that we may be freed from the captivity of the Devil."

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In this passage, the venerable author places the ministry of the clergy in conjunction with the power of Christ: and asserts, that by both united, the sinner will be pardoned. Confession is, certainly, insinuated by the words: "the assistance of the ministers!"

Saint Basil, another Greek father, is still more explicit:

"NECESSARILY," he writes, (*in Quæst. brev. Reg. page* 288) "our sins must be confessed to those to whom has been committed the dispensation of the mysteries of God.

This quotation requires no comment—the NECESSITY of confession is distinctly enforced.

Saint Chrysostom, likewise a Greek, in his twentieth Homily on Genesis, speaks in the following terms:

"If the sinner, as becomes him, would use the salutary aid of his conscience, and hasten to confess his crimes and disclose his ulcer to the physician, who may heal and not reproach, and receive remedies from him; if he would speak to him alone, without the privity of any one, and with care lay all before him, easily would he amend his failings—for the confession of sins is the absolution of crimes."

In such strong and unequivocal language, did the oriental fathers insist on the efficacy and necessity of confession. What would the grave personage who accused us of acting ludicrously in this matter, have said, had

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this passage been placed under his consideration! What is your impression thus far?

But let us consult the Latin fathers, and compare their sentiments, on this subject, with those of the Greek writers. Turn to Saint Cyprian, in his work *on the Fallen*, page 134, and conclude for yourself:

"All, my brethren, must confess their faults, while he that has offended enjoys life; while his confession can be received, and while *satisfaction and pardon imparted by the priests* are acceptable before God.

Saint Augustine, in his work on Visiting the Sick, addresses the sick person in this manner:

"Beg, therefore, the priest to come to you, and open to him your conscience. Be not seduced by the reveries of those superstitious ones, who would persuade you, that confession made to God, of which the priest knows nothing, will save you—undoubtedly we ought frequently to be acknowledging ourselves guilty before God: this we do not deny: but we tell you, and sound doctrine teaches you, that *you have need of the salutary sentence of the priest*, which is to intervene between you and your God."

Can there be any doubt, after this passage, and especially that marked in italics, of the conviction of Saint Augustine on the doctrine of confession? Does he not speak as plainly as language can convey his ideas? Does he not express himself precisely in the terms of a modern Catholic? And should not our adver-

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saries, before they ridicule this tenet, read attentively the original texts of this venerable and saintly writer?

Saint Jerome agrees perfectly with Augustine. One very short extract will suffice to convince you of this. In his Commentary on the Sixteenth Chapter of St. Matthew, he writes as follows:

"The priest having heard, as his duty requires, the various qualities of sin, understands who should be bound, and who should be loosed."

It is, then, according to Saint Jerome, the *duty* of the priest to hear the various sins of the penitent.—This can be done only by confession: consequently, confession to the priest is a duty.

Is not this correct reasoning? And is it not beyond all question, that St. Jerome believed in the necessity of confession—and, of course, was a Catholic?

I have met with another passage from Saint Augustine, which I cannot refrain from copying: it is taken from his *Enarration* on the Sixty-sixth Psalm:

"Be sorrowful, therefore," he writes, "before confession; after it be glad, for now thou shalt be healed. Thy conscience had collected matter: the imposthume had swelled: it pained thee: it allowed thee no rest. The physician applies the fermentation of advice; he has recourse, when the evil requires it, to the knife. Do thou embrace the hand—*confess*, and, in this confession may all that is foul be done away."

These quotations will suffice to convince you of the

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fact, that confession, as practised, at the present day, in the Catholic church, was in use, and considered necessary, in those ages, when, according to the concession of all, religion was in her original purity. I will next show, from the most indisputable authority, that it was approved of, and deemed an Apostolic Institution, by many of the gravest writers of the Church of England. —Nay, I will go farther—I will make it clear, that the original canons of that church, required, under certain circumstances, that confession should be made.

LETTER XLV.

I have just got back from a ride through a very beautiful country:—and although I have been out no short time, it is yet very early, the sun just beginning to send forth from the clear horizon his first rays. What a healthful, and cheering mode of exercising! every breeze inhaled imparts new vigour to the lungs, fresh alacrity to the spirits, and an enlivening elasticity to the nerves. And what a pleasure to the contemplative heart, to view the beauties of creation at this dewy hour; and through them adore our Creator, and heavenly Father. How his goodness takes care of the human family? By Him the lily of the valley is clothed, and the birds of the air, and the beasts of the

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field are provided for. O Christian, be thou of good cheer.

Refreshed after my morning exercise, I sit down, full of the subject of my correspondence, and joyfully continue the theme, which, at once, elevates the mind to the highest speculations, and recalls the image of TRUTH, in all its fairest delineaments, before my fancy's eye.

Have I not satisfied you with regard to the testimonies adduced from the primitive Fathers, on the subject of confession? From the authorities which I mean to quote below, it will as evidently appear, that the founders of the Church of England admitted the importance of this ancient dogma, and sought to enforce the practice of it, at least on certain occasions.

The following passage is familiar to all Episcopalians; the language, no doubt, is imprinted on their memories, though its meaning, perhaps, has never been seriously analyzed by many.

"And because it is requisite that no man should come to the holy communion, but with a full trust in God's mercy, and with a quiet conscience; therefore, if there be any of you, who by this means cannot quiet his own conscience herein, but requireth further comfort or counsel, let him come to me," (says the minister,) "or to some other discreet and learned minister of God's word, and open his grief; that by the ministry of God's holy word, he may receive the benefit of *absolution*, together with ghostly counsel and advice, to the quieting

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of his conscience, and avoiding of all scruple and doubtfulness."

There is a manifest stress laid upon *absolution*, which is contradistinguished from "ghostly counsel and advice." The minister is stated to have the power to impart that blessing: and it is declared to be the duty of all such as experience the least disquietude or scruple of conscience, to have recourse to his ministry, and profit by his power.

The principle is, then, admitted by the ancient Protestant, as well as the Catholic, church. We only extend the duty farther than our separated brethren; and, instead of binding those whose consciences cannot be perfectly calmed by their own devotion and faith, we command all, at least once in the year, to approach the tribunal of confession.

In the visitation of the sick, the obligation is made almost indispensable, on the part of the infirm penitent, to confess: for the minister is enjoined to exhort him:

"To make a SPECIAL CONFESSION OF HIS SINS, if he feel his conscience troubled with any weighty matter."

Now, where is to be found the person, who, as the shades of death are gathering about his pillow, when the delusion of life is fading away, and fashion, and dissipation, and mirth are hushed into the anticipated silence of the grave—where, I ask, is the person, under these circumstances, when examining his conscience with the awe of God's judgment before his mind, when

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surveying the past, from the dawn of reason to the day of his decline, but will feel his conscience troubled? And, therefore, where is the Christian, who will not be bound to make "a special confession of his sins?"

After his confession, the priest shall absolve him—the Protestant ritual directs—in these words:

"Our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath left power to his church to absolve all sinners, who truly repent and believe in him, of his great mercy forgive thee thine offences: and by his authority COMMITTED TO ME, I ABSOLVE THEE from all thy sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen."

This is, in substance, the very form of absolution used in the Catholic church. And yet, when the poor servant-girl asks permission of her Protestant employer to go to confession, she is laughed at, deemed priest-ridden and silly.—"Do you go to the priest for absolution?" she is asked,—"who can forgive sins but God alone?"

Little does he reflect upon the requisitions of his own church, or understand the spirit of its primitive institutions. As for yourself, you have ever respected this dogma, and, after reading what I have to adduce on the subject, peradventure you may feel it a duty to practice what you respect.

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LETTER XLVI.

In order to leave no doubt whatever on your mind, touching the spirit and meaning of the general rubric of the Church of England, I will, in this letter, bring before your consideration several passages from the works of her most eminent authors. I have before, on several occasions, quoted Dr. Montague, I again refer you to his "Appeal," chapter thirty-second:

"*Private* confession to a priest," (he there writes) "is of very ancient practice in the church, of excellent use and benefit; being discreetly handled. We refuse it to none, if men require it, if need be to have it: we urge and persuade it *in extremis:* we REQUIRE IT in the case of perplexities for quieting of men disturbed, and their consciences."

The Church of England, then, has the right, according to this distinguished prelate of that communion, to *require* the confession of sins. The Catholic church claims the same right: and the only difference is, that instead of requiring it merely under certain circumstances, she requires it once a year, at least, and especially *in extremis.*

What ground, then, has the modern Protestant to inveigh, with so much emphasis and satirical allusion, against this practice, which is manifestly grounded up-

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on Scriptural authority, and vindicated by such a man as the Bishop of Chester.

But, think not that he stands alone in his opinion: no, there are others of no less eminence in the same church, who confirm his doctrine, and assert the claims for which I now contend.

Bishop Andrews, his contemporary, not merely admits the expediency of private confession, but goes still farther, and contends for its *necessity*. In his *court sermon*, preached before James I., discussing the twenty-third verse of the twenty-second chapter of Saint John, he expresses himself thus:

"We are not, the ordinance of God thus standing, to rend off one part of the sentence: There are here expressed three persons: 1. The person of the sinner, in *whose*, 2, of God, in *are forgiven*, 3, of the priest in you *shall forgive*. Three are expressed; and where three are expressed, three are required; and where three are required, two are not enough."

Is not this the genuine doctrine of the Catholic church? And do I, in defending the institution of confession, do any thing more, than was done, so clearly and ably, by the renowned Protestant prelate whose language I have cited?

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When friend and foe unite together
To vindicate a fact,
With justice may I ask you, whether
Reason could more desire,
Philosophy require,
Or incredulity exact?

Certainly not; every ingenuous mind must admit that, since confession is advised by one denomination, and required by another, it does not deserve the sarcasms which the hollow wit of certain superficial writers would fain cast upon it.

The authority of Bishop Andrews will preponderate over all the sophistry of our prejudiced adversaries: and what will be the power of argument, when to his name is added that of St. Augustine, whom he quotes to support his position:

"It is," he continues in the above-cited sermon, "Saint Augustine that thus speaketh of the ecclesiastical act in his time."

After which he makes the following solid observation:

"God ordinarily proceedeth in remitting sin, by the church's act. And hence they have their part in this work and cannot be excluded, no more in this than in other acts and parts of their function, and to exclude them, is (after a sort) to wring the keys out of their hands, to whom Christ hath given them; is to cancel and make void this clause of *you shall forgive*, as if it were no part of the sentence; to account of all

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this solemn sending and inspiring, as if it were an idle and fruitless ceremony."

In enforcing the necessity of auricular confession, therefore, I merely insist upon carrying into effect the commission given by the Redeemer. A practice common to all divines, during past ages; and a requisition acknowledged and approved by the most learned divines of the Protestant denomination. Luther himself, though, in most points, avowedly hostile to the usages of the Catholic church, far from condemning this doctrine, affirms that he believes it to be of infinite utility. —In his own language:

"Man," he writes, "ought to confess to God all his sins, even those he knows not of; and to his director those only he knows and feels in his conscience." This is all that we require.—In these words of the arch-reformer are contained the meaning and spirit of the injunction of our religion regarding sacramental confession. But, unfortunately, the system even of that far-famed champion in the cause of the reformation has long since changed in this particular: and every other one, adopted upon similar grounds, depending upon the mobility of the human mind, the caprice of the human intellect, must be subject to perpetual changes.

"————Tanquam
Sit proprium quidquam, puncto quod mobilis horæ,
Nunc prece, nunc pretio, nunc vi, nunc sorte suprema
Permutet Dominos—"

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No, there is nothing unchangeable but the institutions of that true religion which stands established, supported, and secured, on the promises of its divine founder. His word has been given; and, though heaven and earth may pass away, his word shall not pass away.

LETTER XLVII.

May I be allowed to quote one of the most beautiful, though, unfortunately, one of the most dangerous, writers of France? Perhaps the topic which I am now discussing could not derive, in its support, a more popular argument than that founded on the authority, based upon the dispassionate observation, of a philosopher. I am not certain that you have ever read the *Emile* of Rousseau, a work fraught with talent, beauty, sentiment, truth, error, and extraordinary inconsistency.

The greatest writer now living in France, I do not except even Chateaubriand, has, in a very powerful and elegant essay, styled "L'Essai sur L'indifference," clearly detected the strange incoherencies, and refuted the singular sophistry, of that splendid writer.

Yet, we must admit, that no man is better able to take a dispassionate view of the effects and nature of things, than a philosopher: and, the more opposed he may be to Christianity, the more potent and satisfactory should be his testimony in favour of any particular

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dogma of religion. Rousseau, then, in observing the salutary consequences of confession, could not restrain his admiration; but broke forth into the following exclamation, which I treasure up as worth more than all the declamation of certain professors in certain theological seminaries, or the sickly productions of certain "Watchmen" who smell strongly of the lamp:

"What works of mercy are the works of the gospel!" exclaims Jean Jacques—"What reparations and restitutions does not confession cause to be made among the Catholics! Among all, what effect has the approach of the period for communion in producing reconciliation and alms-deeds!" *Emile*, Tom. III.

And, I will add, if no other benefits than these were the result of auricular confession, these, of themselves, would suffice to vindicate its utility and necessity.

Oh! were we truly penetrated with sorrow for sin—were we thoroughly acquainted with the nature of it—did we solemnly reflect upon what it has cost the Redeemer, the punishment consequent upon it, in this, and the future world;—did we consider how the angels fell from their bright spheres pursued by thunder into the abyss of eternal wo; how our first parents were banished from the calm and blissful shades of Eden; what scourges have devastated the guilty world; the wars, famine, pestilence, that have swept away its inhabitants, we should be more ready to submit to any humi-

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liating condition which the Almighty might have thought proper to require, in order that sin may be pardoned. He has been offended: it rests with him, not with ourselves, to prescribe the conditions of pardon. Those conditions, no matter how repugnant to our nature, it is manifest we must submit to, if we desire to obtain mercy and reconciliation. But, from every quarter, from every possible authority, I have derived the necessary conditions of confession: from the scripture, from the primitive fathers, from the universal practice, from the testimony of the most eminent Protestant divines: and what now remains, but to leave you to your own considerations, to your own calm conclusions, and sacred convictions.

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INDULGENCES.

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LETTER XLVIII.

"Whatever may be alleged in favour of confession," said a learned jurisconsult to a venerable clergyman in your presence, "Indulgences can have no foundation to rest on." This is, indeed, a very positive assertion: it is a sweeping sentence, which, if true, lays low the entire edifice of Catholicism. If no authority, of the most indubitable character, could be adduced to support the divine origin, and proper administration, of indulgences, certainly the church which maintains them would not possess the attribute of truth, in all her doctrines. It will require but a few words to convince you, that however learned the gentleman may be in the science of law, he, certainly, evinces no little ignorance with regard to the original institutions of Christianity.

I am fully aware, in entering on this subject, that no other article of the Catholic creed has been animadverted upon with more keen severity, and bitter satire, than this. I do not forget, that it was this that shook the foundations of Christendom, in the beginning of the sixteenth century—that it was

"the spring of woes unnumbered,"

and, even now, constitutes the theme of the modern controvertist, and the taunt of the infidel.

But, it is necessary, in order to form a correct idea of the tenet, that you should understand the real definition

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of it. I am ready to avow, that were the doctrine such as it is mis-stated to be, no one could stand forward too promptly, or too energetically, to condemn, refute, repudiate it. The adversaries of the Catholic church would not be able to wield against such a system a more unrelenting weapon than ourselves.

But, you will soon be convinced of the injustice which is done us—of the temerity, not to use a harsher term, of our opponents, in framing for us a doctrine, as senseless as it is impious; as absurd as it is irreligious.

They state, and you find it in the most popular, as well as the most prosing, effusions, that an indulgence is the permission to commit sin, and an unconditional pardon for the past, present, and the future.

Now, I put the question, in all the simplicity which language admits of, and I ask: what is an indulgence?

I answer first, negatively: it is *not*, a license to commit sin. It is *not* an encouragement of sin. It is *not* a pardon of sin, either in this world, or in that to come.

This will satisfy your candid mind, which never conceived of our doctrine the opinions propagated by its adversaries. And, I am sure you must feel a sentiment of astonishment how, after every enlightened writer on these subjects has protested, so unequivocally and solemnly, against the manner in which they are mis-represented, the mis-statement is believed, and little or no attention is paid to the plain and genuine doctrine concerning indulgences.

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There are some, however, who will turn an attentive ear to the voice of candour and truth.

Having given a negative definition of an indulgence, I will now state the positive definition of it.

An indulgence is the release from temporal punishment due to sin, after the sin has been forgiven.

You will observe, then, that it has nothing to do with the remission of sin: it pre-supposes that the sin is forgiven. It merely affects the punishment, which often is inflicted upon the sinner, after he has repented for his iniquities. And let it not appear strange to you that, after pardon has been granted for sin, there may still remain some atonement to be made in satisfaction to the Divine Justice. This can be proved from the sacred Scriptures:

You know, though Adam was forgiven,
The woes which from his sin have flowed:
With Eve, his fickle consort, driven
From their once innocent abode:
Sent by the seraph's burning sword,
Exiles, before the vengeance of the Lord!
Condemned, alas! with their own sweat,
The bread of bitterness to eat!

And David, though his lyre had oft,
Been watered with contrition's tears:
And sorrow's minstrelsy, so soft
And deeply plaintive wailed his prayers;
And though the holy seer of Heaven
Assured him that his sin had been forgiven;
Still was he doomed, at the appointed time,
To lose the offspring of his crime.

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You have only to consult the second book of Kings, chapter the twelfth, verse the fourteenth, to make yourself acquainted with, or rather to bring back to your memory, all the particulars of this fact.

Our adversaries, then, need not ask, with such a significant emphasis, how this can be: for, nothing is more certain than that a certain punishment does remain to be inflicted after the sin itself has been forgiven.

I desire you particularly to bear in mind, that the guilt of sin is not, in any manner, remissible by the application of an indulgence. Forgiveness of sin requires a deep sorrow of the heart, a detestation of all iniquity, a resolution to avoid it: without these conditions, no indulgence, no absolution, nothing, can confer pardon. When, therefore, it is asserted, that by purchasing an indulgence, the Catholic may obtain a general license to commit sin, you will know how to treat so groundless and calumnious a statement. You will remember what I love to insist upon, as it is the real doctrine of our church, that, unless there be sorrow and repentance, all the indulgences ever granted, from the earliest ages down to the present day, would be idle, useless, and inapplicable.

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LETTER XLIX.

"I have brought you a sweet present," said Theodore, running to me with an eye beaming with sentiment, "one of my prettiest flowers. It is a wild moss rose; smell it, how fragrant! keep it, as long as it retains its freshness"— and he placed it upon my breast.

I thought, when I viewed that lovely flower, how evanescent is life! And I said to myself, this flower so fresh and fragile, reminds me to continue the investigation we have been carrying on, and which must lead to TRUTH, always unchangeably the same.

Hardly had I sat down at my desk, before the servant knocked at my door, to inform me that a stranger wished to see me. He was a professor in a neighbouring theological seminary, and "not unknown to fame." In the classics and polite literature, he was an accomplished scholar; on the subject of the Catholic religion, as ignorant as a child.

He introduced himself to me, of whom, he said, he had often heard; and peremptorily declared, that his object in troubling me, on this occasion, was to converse on the subject of indulgences.

"How can an educated man defend the abuses," he observed, "growing out of the system of indulgences?"

"The abuses, sir," I replied, "no sensible Catholic would pretend to vindicate. On the contrary, it is the duty of every one to deprecate them most candidly."

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"Of course, then, the whole system must fall."

"How do you arrive at such a conclusion?" I returned.

"Because, what is liable to be so egregiously abused, cannot be the work of God," he urged.

"This is very illogical reasoning, sir. Christianity itself has been abused in every possible manner. The deist argues against it, on the same ground which you assume against this particular tenet. I care not how many vessels are said to have been freighted with indulgences for South America. I have nothing to do with them. All I contend for, is the pure, original doctrine, as it was established, and is believed by the church."

The conversation continued for a considerable time, the substance of which, as it is precisely on the topic which I have been treating, I will make the subject of my next letter. The professor's ideas seemed to undergo a serious change, before we separated: and, I am confident, that you cannot but acknowledge with me, that the doctrines of the Catholic church need only be examined, to be admired; perhaps, I might add, when there is question of one so sincere and ingenuous as yourself, to be believed.

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LETTER L.

The substance of my conversation with the professor was as follows: I stated, that an indulgence, in its original acceptation, was a dispensation from the whole or a part of the punishment required by the canons of the church, for sufficient motives; of which the chief pastor was the judge. For instance, certain sins were visited with certain rigid penalties. The man guilty of a public crime was condemned to undergo a public penance. If, then, it appeared, that such a person had the dispositions of sorrow which the modern Protestant would require, he might, by contributing a certain sum of money for the relief of the sick in hospitals, or for poor orphans in asylums, or for the propagation of the Christian religion among infidels, or for the building of churches, be relieved from the shame and rigour of the penalty, which the canons demanded. In one word, an indulgence was a salutary exemption, for good reasons, and granted by proper authority, from the canonical punishment: not a remission of the sin itself.

The professor asked me, if there was any text in Scripture from which the propriety of such indulgence could be derived? I referred him, as I now do you, to the example of St. Paul, who certainly exercised the power claimed by the pastors of the church, when, after excommunicating the Corinthian, he restored him, upon

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being convinced of his sorrow, to the privileges and communion of the faithful.

Turn to the first Epistle to the Corinthians, chapter fifth, and you will read these verses:

"It is reported commonly," this is the Protestant version, "that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife.

"And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned that he that hath done this deed might not be taken from among you.

"For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present concerning him that hath done this deed.

"In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ,

To deliver such a one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus."

In these texts, it is very certain, St. Paul excommunicates, to make use of the proper, though not the most popular term, the sinful Corinthian.

I will show you, from another passage, that, perceiving in him extraordinary signs of repentance, the Apostle did away the punishment to which he had originally doomed him; granted him, if I may use the term, a plenary indulgence.

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Take the trouble to turn to the second Epistle to the Corinthians, chapter the second, verses tenth and eleventh.

"To whom ye forgive anything I forgive also, for if I forgave anything, to whom I forgave it, for your sakes forgave I it in the person of Christ.

"Lest Satan should get advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices."

That this refers to the same individual whom he delivered over to Satan, all the ancient commentators agree. St. Paul restored him to the communion from which he had been ejected: he dispensed with the long and rigid penalties which, under ordinary circumstances, he would have been compelled to undergo. In a word, the Apostle granted an indulgence; which indulgence had no reference to the sin committed, but merely, as indulgences are granted by the church, to the punishment due to that sin.

But, I have seen it objected, that the collectors of the money derived from the application of indulgences, proclaimed that they had the efficacy to do away both punishment and *guilt*.

I have merely to answer, in the language of the Council of Vienna, held in the year 1311, under Clement V. (a very dark period no doubt!):

"We, desirous of abolishing such *abuses*, which degrade ecclesiastical censures, and bring contempt upon

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the keys, FORBID MOST STRICTLY the commission, in future, of any and all such unworthy practices."

This I deem a sufficient reply to all the particulars, collected, and exaggerated, and published, and re-published, by "professors," "watchmen," and "essayists." Then turn from their prejudiced pages, and consult our authors. It is unwise to seek in the writings of our enemies the genuine doctrines of the Church.

> Would it be proper, wise, or fair to read
> What its worst enemies against us spread?
> Would'st thou not rather seek, in our own works,
> What we believe, than those where hatred lurks?
> Consult not, then, our pure religion's foes,
> The Catholic best his own religion knows.

And the more you will become acquainted with it, the more, or I am egregiously mistaken, you will admire it.

LETTER LI.

You have read the beautiful lines of Cowper to the Cricket. There are few pieces that congenialize, if I may be allowed to use the term, more sympathetically with my feelings, than that simple, impromptu effusion of one of the most pleasing writers, as I believe him to be, in our language.

Well, the household song of the cricket is now chirruping in my ear, and I pause, and, with the tenderest reminiscences breaking upon my memory, I think of

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long since departed days, when I was a child; when I nodded, half asleep, at this hour, upon my mother's knee, as the solitary cricket kept his vigils on the hearth, singing I know not what ditty, plaintive, feeling, and home-born!

> Home! Home! oh sacred name!
> Where is it?—where we loved the hearth
> In childhood—where the hallowed flame
> Of young affection was first lit:
> Oh! is there aught on earth,
> As life advances, to compare with it!

One as devoted to home, as you are, will feel, as I do, that, travel whither we please, form whatever new friendships we may, there is nothing to compare with the sweet scenes, the sacred associations, the tender reminiscences, of our domestic hearth. I have wandered much. Many times has the ocean borne me upon his perilous waters. I have passed the vine-clad realms of France, I have seen the romantic valleys of Savoy, I have crossed the tremendous Alps, I have travelled through Italy, and have enjoyed the classic scenes of that most beauteous country, and yet my heart will turn and cling to Home.

I think I very much need an *indulgence* for digressing so widely from the subject before us.

Gregory the Seventh, in the year 1057, some four hundred, and more years, before Luther arose to preach against the practice, granted indulgences to the Bishop of Lincoln, "on condition," to use the Pope's own

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language, "that applying yourself to good works, and bewailing your past sins, you make of your body a pure temple of God."

Gelasius II. in the year 1118, asserts, that "each one receives the value of indulgences, in proportion to his penance (or repentance) and good works."

Innocent IV. in 1243 writes: "Indulgences are generally granted to labour, perils, and devout exercises: some, nevertheless, derive more benefit from them than others, according as *they dispose themselves for them with greater devotion*."

Urban VIII., proclaiming the customary jubilee, in 1300, thus addresses the Archbishops and Bishops:

"Instruct your people that in vain will they expect to derive any benefit from the sacred treasure of indulgences, if they do not prepare themselves by a contrite and humble heart, and do not exercise themselves in works of Christian piety."

Does this look like a full pardon for sin past and future! Do not these pontiffs, who flourished amid the reputed darkness and ignorance of the middle ages, agree perfectly with the doctrine which I have laid down, and the church inculcates, in the nineteenth century! In the name of honour, therefore, and justice, and religion, give no credence whatever to the fabrications of men who invent to suit the taste of prejudice, or falsify, to pander to their own interest and speculations.

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But, how surprising will it appear to the modern Protestant to learn, that even the Church of England was in the habit of conceding indulgences, granting commutations! and that there were certain officers appointed by the ecclesiastical courts, *to collect the monies*, paid for such commutations.

There are authentic documents substantiating this fact: and, for your satisfaction, and the instruction of your friends who may peruse this letter, I will cite the original canon, which refers to them:

"That no chancellor or commissary, or official shall have power to commute any penance, in whole or in part, but either together with the bishop, &c. That he shall give a full and just account of such commutations to the bishop, who shall see that all such monies shall be disposed of for charitable and public uses, according to law—saving always to ecclesiastical officers their *due and accustomable fees*." *Canon fourteenth*, Sparrow, page 368.

Is it not undeniable, therefore, that indulgences were granted by the canon law, as well as approved and regulated by the civil law in England. Did not the framers of the constitution of the English church understand its spirit and bearing, better than the professors of the same creed do, at the present era, in this country? If your Protestant friends ridicule the idea of indulgences in the Catholic church, do not fail to point

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their attention to the canon above quoted, and they will there perceive their inconsistency.

LETTER LII.

Spirit of summer, that didst scatter thy fragrance and loveliness around me; cool zephyr whose aërial wings, wet with morning-dew and stored with health, were wont to fan me in my matin ramblings; pure stream, whose crystal mirror gave back, in pellucid reflection, the calm azure of the vesper firmament; and ye blithe warblers of the grove, farewell. The stern monotony, the rigid and sacred realities and duties of my vocation await me, amid the business and selfishness of the city's noisy vortex.

How evanescent are all the flowers of summer! and yet their short-lived destiny teaches us, in a touching manner, how vain is everything, save that eternal treasure, which truth, religion, and heart-felt piety, can alone bestow:

Oh! is not all that glares and smiles
In wealth's deep mines, in beauty's glow—
Oh! is not all for which man toils,
And labour wastes itself below,

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Vain, fleeting, false !—and genius, too,
With all its lustre beaming bright,
And fancy, with each varied hue,
Sparkling, like rainbow tints, with light;

And fashion, with her gaudy train,
Decked with her flowers, adorned with gems,
And grandeur towering by, are vain,
And vain the monarch's diadems.
Pleasure, with wanton tresses fair,
Tripping luxuriant o'er the meads,
With scented chaplets on her hair
And roses springing where she treads,

Is but a phantom gliding through
The fragrant moon-lit bower at night;
Scarce has it charmed the incautious view,
Than flits it from the wondering sight!
Oh spirit of immortal man!
Wouldst thou enjoy true bliss and rest?
Extend thy hopes beyond life's span;
In heaven thou mayst be ever blest!

Yes, as I remarked in the beginning of this correspondence, religion, and the truths intimately connected with religion, are infinitely more important than any other study that could occupy the human mind, or interest the human heart. I have attempted to direct your attention to this study. I have endeavoured to show you how ignorant some of the wisest men are of our tenets, ceremonies, and customs.

But the subject is not yet exhausted: much still remains to be expounded and defended. While the storms

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of winter rage about us, and the snow whitens the fields but lately so lovely and verdant; while the crackling flame usurps the hearth, which the fragrant flowers of summer so recently adorned, I will pursue my investigation, and continue my correspondence.

Peace attend you in all your ways. May happiness be your companion, religion shine upon your mind, and charity warm all the affections of your heart.

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TRANSUBSTANTIATION.

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LETTER LIII.

The subject on which I now enter, is, perhaps, the most unpopular of all others. There exists a kind of inborn prejudice in the hearts of thousands, who, in many other respects, are truly good and amiable, against this tenet. Are you impatient to know what subject I allude to? I have no doubt but that you have anticipated the reply:—TRANSUBSTANTIATION.

What is it that has mainly fixed upon our faith the deep seal of malevolence, and is assumed as a ground of almost insuperable hostility?—*Transubstantiation.* What is it that kept alive the fierce spirit of persecution and exclusion in England, during a period of three hundred years?—*Transubstantiation.* What is it that proscribed from their birth-rights the Catholic peers, the descendants of the noblest and bravest barons, and truest knights?—That banished them from their seats in the House of Lords, and from their privileges as Peers of the realm?—*Transubstantiation.* What is it that, in our own good country, excites the strongest prejudice against our church?—*Transubstantiation.* And, nevertheless, this forms an essential point of our doctrines; and we believe, and can prove, too, that this strange truth has been revealed by the founder of the Christian religion, and is inseparable from her existence.

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Bread, though it seem to human eye
To human touch, to human taste,
Beneath those elements can faith descry
"The body of the Lord"—a rich repast
Which angels cannot feast on—but which they
In ecstasy adore, while favoured man,
Redeemed from his prevarication, may
Eat "unto life eternal:" who can scan
The heights of such a mystery?—yet who
Could dare deny it—if it be but TRUE?

And how can we discover whether it is true or not, except by carefully examining the proofs by which it is substantiated—the arguments on which it rests—the documents in which it is inculcated! To this examination I now invite your special attention. I ask you not to believe any thing which will not be proved to your satisfaction. But, at the same time, beware how you admit any prejudice against our doctrines, no matter how incomprehensible, how mysterious, until you have read and digested the arguments which we bring forward to support them. It is the part of a wise mind to hesitate—to reflect—to analyze—to compare—to reason—on subjects vitally affecting our welfare here and hereafter. And you, I feel confident, are among those who will not suffer themselves to be biased by mere assertion, influenced by vague vituperation. You are too deeply concerned for your immortal happiness; you have too sensitive a sympathy for your fellow Christians; you are actuated by too general a feeling

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for religion and piety, to refuse to investigate, much less to sear, with a fiery anathema, those who deem it their sacred duty to believe in the doctrine of Transubstantiation.

I agree with you, that this doctrine is incomprehensible and extraordinary: that human reason cannot pierce through the mystery which envelopes it. But, I disagree entirely with our amiable friend ———, who asserts "that we cannot be required to believe any thing, which we are not able to understand." You must, and I am confident, do, sincerely feel the groundlessness of the remark. You perceive, at a glance, the inconsistency contained in such an avowal: and the best reply you can make to Laurentia, when she accosts you in such language, will be this: Do you understand the Trinity of the Godhead, or the Divinity of Christ?

Behold, how strange and capricious is the mind of man!

LETTER LIV.

Well may I urge upon the believer in the divinity of Christ a palpable inconsistency, in rejecting transubstantiation, merely on the ground of the incomprehensibility of the doctrine. Indeed, with much vigor and

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effect might it be brought to bear upon the believer in the existence of God himself.

Tell me, who can understand how a being never commenced, and is never to have an end! Always was —always will be! Or, rather, to use the sublime idea of the scripture, always IS. "I am, who am."

Tell me, who can understand how, in that eternal being, there exist three persons—and yet there is but one Deity: all are distinct in person—all are identic in nature—all constitute but the self-same, omnipotent, omnipresent, and everlasting ONE.

Tell me, who can understand, how the Father is not more ancient than the Son—or the Son more ancient than the Holy Ghost: but all three are coeval, and yet the Son is begotten of the Father, and the Holy Ghost proceeds from both.

Tell me, who can understand how the second person of the Trinity, who is, in essence, the same as the Father, could become man without the Father's assuming human nature? How can God be man—at the same time one and the other—both hypostatically united in the same person—both infinitely distinct? Can this be explained by those who believe it? Can this be understood by Laurentia—who will not admit any thing in the Eucharist which transcends the ken of her comprehension?

Who can reason upon the incarnation of the word? Can the Prostestant? He may, indeed, reason upon the

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testimonies which are extant, corroborative of that marvellous dogma—he may consult the scriptures—he may interrogate the earliest Fathers—he may have recourse to the primitive monuments on the subject; but, beyond that he cannot reason. He may be convinced of the divinity of Christ, but he surely owes not that conviction to the faculty of mere reason, but to the authority of the church, and the wisest and greatest men of antiquity.

So is it with regard to the Eucharist—transubstantiation. The Catholic can reason so far as to convince himself that there exist sufficient proofs by which to establish the doctrine. He can reason—inasmuch as he can satisfy his mind, by severe investigation, that this doctrine was believed, inculcated, and considered essential—incomprehensible though it be—precisely as that of Christ's divinity was believed, inculcated, and considered essential, by the same church, and the same venerable personages of antiquity. He reads the scripture on the subject—he takes up the volumes of the Fathers—he searches into the monuments of ecclesiastical history—and he becomes convinced, that transubstantiation is no less admitted, no less insisted on, than any other mystery in the Christian dispensation.

Laurentia objects to the mystery of the Eucharist! What does she think of the mysteries of the physical world? Ask her if she has ever reflected upon her own being: her own strange, incomprehensible, fearful or-

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ganization? Upon the mysterious union of soul and body—the mysterious sympathy existing between them?

Oh! every thing around we see,
Taste, feel, and breathe, is mystery:
The leaf that fans the summer's heat,
The stream that gurgles freshly on,
The grass we tread beneath our feet,
The spreading oak that cleaves the hill
The bird that sings her hymn upon
The morning's ear—the snows which fill
The vale's deep chasm, the showers that fall
Upon the good and bad—are mysteries all.

And, if such inexplicable mysteries are, every where, to be discovered in nature, from the frail gossimer that floats upon the air, to the great cedar shadowing the lofty summits of Lebanon, who will presume to reject a dogma of religion, because it cannot be understood? You are one, who not only would not be guilty of such inconsistency, but who cannot but feel astonished how it can exist in any reasoning mind.

LETTER LV.

The doctrine of the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist was believed, by all Christians, and was never called in question until the days of Berengarius. This was the first person, recorded in history, who dared con-

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trovert a tenet, which had been left unassailed by the early heresiarchs.—Arius might deny the divinity of Christ— he did not attack the real presence. Macedonius might deny the divinity of the Holy Ghost. The Greeks might deny the procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father and the Son. Pelagius might deny original sin. Nestorius might deny the maternity of the mother of God. Eutyches might deny the existence of the two natures of Christ—but no one of them ever directly impugned the dogma which I am now defending. It was not until the eleventh century, that there arose a man adventurous enough to dispute a point which no one ever questioned before him. But, he was immediately denounced by all the great and learned men of his day. His innovation was condemned. Lanfranc stood foremost in the ranks of the defenders of the ancient faith: and Berengarius himself retracted his error, acknowledged that he had broached a new doctrine, or rather, that he had assailed the ancient belief; and died in the communion of the church.

The error of the dogmatizer slept with him in the grave, till the era of Zuinglius.—He, with bold design, conjured up the innovation—he awoke the heresy from its profound slumbers. He, in opposition to the theology of the arch-reformer himself, proclaimed the resuscitated error, and, in defence of his conduct, braved the

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anathemas of the Vatican, and the abuse of Martin Luther.

> He heeded not the wrath of either;
> But spurned the Pope and Luther, too;
> He feared the anathemas of neither:—
> Reformers quarreling!—eheu!

The opinions of Zuinglius were adopted in England, under the reign of Edward VI.; and while Luther's reformation was admitted in that same country, Luther's doctrine regarding the real presence was rejected and condemned.

And yet, though this doctrine was declared idolatrous and anti-scriptural, by the laws of England, we shall, in the course of this investigation, find some of the most eminent divines of the established church, declaring in favour of it, or, at least, expressing their convictions, after profound inquiry into the subject, that the Catholic church established her faith in the real presence, upon authority the most venerable, and testimony the most indisputable.

All this shall be laid before you in due time and order.

> Then shall you find
> Whether or not we be as blind
> As we are represented—then
> The acrimony of those men
> Who wage a war of words and hate
> Will be exposed.—
> But now 'tis late:
> The night-wind moans around the hall;
> And pattering rains in torrents fall.

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LETTER LVI.

You tell me that very strong objections have occurred to you, and have been strongly enforced, too, by certain personages, against the doctrine of the real presence. And I may remark here, before entering upon their refutation, that we will separate the two doctrines, and treat first the actual and real presence of Christ in the Eucharist—and then the tenet of transubstantiation.

Well, then, as to the objections. "How can it be," it is urged, "that the Son of God could expose his body to be insulted, abused, and sacrilegiously treated, as it must often be, in the Eucharist?"

The person who insists upon this plausible objection, believes in the divinity of Christ: does he not? With equal effect, then, might I retort the argument, and ask: "how can it be that God could become man, and not only be exposed to be insulted and abused, but actually submit to be despised, treated as a malefactor, trodden upon, in the prophetic language, as a "worm," and condemned to die in torment and disgrace, upon a cross! The Unitarian urges that this cannot be! "God," he says, "cannot be so identified with man, as to be subjected to pain, contumely, persecution, death."

And, in truth, if the first assertion—"that Christ cannot be in the Eucharist, because he is there too fre-

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quently insulted," be true—the force of the Unitarian's argument must be irresistible. Is it not so? Can you perceive the least disparity in the two cases? Reflect upon them seriously, and the more you reflect, the less difficulty you will find in admitting the doctrine which has been so much vituperated, but which cannot be refuted by solid argument.

Remember, the Jew smiles when he hears the Christian proclaim that the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob was seen on earth, in the nature of man—was born in a stable of Bethlehem, and condemned by the High Priests and King of Israel, to the ignominy of crucifixion!

Remember, the Deist laughs at the Protestant when he is told by him, that the books of the old and new testament were dictated by divine inspiration—that God speaks through them—that the prophets were his oracles, and that Jesus was his Son. When, therefore, you see persons, whose education has imbued them with almost unconquerable prejudices against the real presence, be not influenced by their prejudices more than you would by those of the Jew, the Unitarian, or the Deist.

"But," it is triumphantly asked, "how can the body of Christ be at the same time in ten thousand different places? Is not this impossible? And, consequently, does not the whole system tumble into ruins?"

This is repeated and repeated, again and again, as an

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unanswerable objection. But let us examine its nature —try its apparent force.

In order to reply to the difficulty, it will be necessary to explain in what sense we believe the body of Christ to be in the Eucharist. Do we believe his body is there, in the same mortal, and gross condition, in which our bodies are on earth? By no means: if this were the doctrine of the church, it would, indeed, be subject to the difficulty in question. But you are aware, that the Catholic church teaches that the body of our Saviour is present under the sacramental elements in its glorified, heavenly, and immortal state: with all the attributes of a spiritualized body—as it arose, from the dead, leaving the tomb in which the Arimathean had deposited it, and going forth through every obstruction in majesty and power. Cannot a body in such a condition be, at the same time, in many places? What philosopher will presume to deny it? Especially when he considers how little he is acquainted with spirit and matter, and how ignorant he is of the formation, increase, and attributes of the natural body itself.

Dost thou not see
How inconsistent are mankind!
Knowing that all is mystery,
Which in the natural world we find!
Why not admit that there may be
A mystery of another kind!

At least, why do not men suspend their judgments on

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this subject, until they have entered dispassionately and religiously into the investigation of the doctrine? Follow me, and I am sure you will discover convincing arguments.

LETTER LVII.

When I ask a Protestant of the present day if he can believe in the real presence, he answers "no." If he is asked whether he can believe that a body can penetrate a solid wall without any visible mode of admission—he pauses for a reply. But when he is informed that Christ did appear, with his true and natural, though glorified body, in a room, "the doors being shut"—and that this fact is recorded in Scripture, I know not what he will say.

Consult the Gospel of St. John, twentieth chapter and nineteenth verse. You are bound to believe this truth, although it is impossible for the human mind to comprehend it. Now, if we find the doctrine of the real presence recorded in the same infallible Scriptures, we are equally bound to believe that too, no matter how incomprehensible.

The whole of the controversy, therefore, is resolved to this simple question: did Christ reveal the doctrine of the real presence, as taught by the Catholic church? If he did, all Christians are under the most solemn and

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awful obligation to bend to the mystery—if not, we are in error. Is not this a plain and candid statement of the case?

I contend that Christ did reveal this doctrine. How are we to know what he has revealed? In the first place, we must examine the Scriptures—they are before me, and I will not shrink from the ordeal. Taking them for my guide, I have to examine these two positions: first, "Did the Redeemer promise to give his body and blood in the Eucharist?" Secondly, "When was the promise fulfilled?"

Turn to the sixth chapter of the gospel of St. John, and, after maturely reading and reflecting on the meaning of that chapter, tell me whether there can be any doubt that Christ made such a promise?

The Evangelist begins by relating the miracle of the multiplication of the loaves and fishes. He starts from this extraordinary narration, in order to prepare the reader for the still more marvellous event promised by the Redeemer.

You are aware that the multitude amounted to five thousand persons; and the five loaves and two fishes were multiplied in so prodigious a manner, that all were not only satisfied, but there remained over and above, fragments enough to fill twelve baskets.

Who, that reasons merely according to the comprehension of his own weak mind, could be convinced that those loaves and fishes could be multiplied as they were!

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—Would not human philosophy exclaim, "It is impossible!—who can believe it?" The Omnipotence which effected that multiplication, can and does effect a multiplication, if this term, although incorrect, may be allowed, to convey my idea, of that heavenly bread, which is more excellent than manna, and which is a pledge of immortal life!

"One of his disciples," writes St. John, "Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, saith unto him,

"There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves and two small fishes; but what are they among so many?

"And Jesus said: let the men sit down. Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand.

"And Jesus took the loaves; and when he had given thanks, he distributed to the disciples; and the disciples to them that were set down; and likewise of the fishes as much as they would.

"When they were filled, he said unto his disciples: Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost.

"Therefore they gathered them together, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments," &c.

The authenticity of this passage will not be questioned by our opponents, when it is known that it is cited from a Protestant translation of the Bible. I leave you to ponder over the subject, until you hear from me again.

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Meanwhile, the shrill scream of the watchman tells the midnight hour to the cold welkin.

LETTER LVIII.

Jesus, after having multiplied the loaves and fishes, wrought another miracle, before making the promise in question—which excited still more intensely the wonder and veneration of the multitude: all with the view of inducing them to believe that he was powerful enough to give what it was his intention to give—his own body and blood in the Eucharist!

Yes, after the humble Redeemer, whom the people wished to make a king, had departed to the mountain, "himself alone," his disciples entered a boat, and bent their way towards Caphernaum. Scarcely had they advanced thirty or forty furlongs from the shore, than a storm arose: the winds blew, the lake was roused, and danger encompassed them around. All hope was gone, and they must have perished amid the waters, had they not been rescued by their Divine Master. He stood before them; his voice was heard amid the tempest: "Be not afraid, it is I;" and he entered the boat, "and immediately," writes the Evangelist, "it was at the land, whither they went."

"When the people saw that Jesus was not there," writes St. John, (twenty-fourth verse,) "they also took

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shipping, and came to Caphernaum, seeking Jesus." They were astonishod how their Master could have crossed the lake, and, unable to restrain their admiration, exclaimed: "Rabbi, when camest thou hither?"

In the reply of Jesus, commencing at the twenty-seventh verse, the great promise begins to be dimly descried. The subject of the spiritual food, which he is one day to communicate to them, is presented to their minds. He chides them for believing in him, for seeking him, not from supernatural motives, but from interest; not because they "saw the miracles," but because they were fed in the wilderness.

"Labour not," he added, "for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life; WHICH THE SON OF MAN SHALL GIVE UNTO YOU!" What was the nature of that meat?—was it equal to the manna which fell in the desert for the sustenance of the Israelites? It was superior; more celestial; more sublime. "Moses gave not the bread of life." No one could give it but the eternal Father and the divine word. "My father giveth you the TRUE BREAD from heaven."

If, then, the bread which Christ promises is of a character more heavenly than the manna, it surely is not, cannot be, common bread: the manna possessed a miraculous quality of satisfying, and sustaining, all the children of Israel. The bread promised by the Redeemer is of a still higher, infinitely higher, character.

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It is nothing less than the body of Christ himself; as he distinctly declared, when the people conjured him to give them that food: "I AM THE LIVING BREAD."

Little did the carnal Jews anticipate such a reply. Little were they prepared to be told, that he, who was then conversing with them, was the very bread of which he had been discoursing. They could not understand this doctrine. They were dissatisfied, and expressed their disappointment by loud murmurs. "The Jews then MURMURED at him, because he said, I AM THE BREAD," (verse forty-one.) Jesus did not retract his assertion; did not modify his meaning; did not explain away the mystery. No: he repeated it; insisted on it; urged it as a point indispensable from his religion, and necessary for all his followers.

"I AM THAT BREAD OF LIFE," (verse forty-eight.) "I AM THE LIVING BREAD WHICH CAME DOWN FROM HEAVEN; and the BREAD which I will give is MY FLESH," &c. (verse fifty-one.)

Remark, attentively, the special cause of their murmurings. It was because Christ said the BREAD which he will give is his FLESH. "They strove among themselves," writes St. John, "saying: HOW CAN THIS MAN GIVE US HIS FLESH TO EAT?"

When the Redeemer heard the question, "HOW?" if he did not intend to give his real body, he should have explained the meaning of his language. The importance of the subject, the circumstances, everything,

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called for a clear explanation of his words. In my next letter, I will examine this point more particularly.

LETTER LIX.

I received a rather unexpected visit, last night, from a stranger, who came introduced, by letter, to me from a good friend of ours in ——. The writer stated, that this person had, during some time past, been under the influence of religious investigation, and began to think that there was but one article of our church which he could hesitate to believe: and that was the real presence.

The hour of ten at night had struck, when a ring was heard at my door. The servant, on opening, was asked whether I was visible at that hour. The stranger apologized for disturbing me at so unseasonable a time, but he had a letter to deliver which, perhaps, he ought not defer presenting until morning. Being informed of the circumstance, I instructed the servant to ask him into my study. My hearth was still glowing, my room comfortable; and on my writing-desk an unfinished letter was lying, with the holy Bible open, and several controversial books around me. "My name, sir," he said, on entering, "is ——. I have just arrived in this city, and must leave again early in the morning. Your

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friend Mr. —— has been kind enough to introduce me to you, and you will know the important cause when you peruse this letter."

I read it; and discovered that the stranger was a gentleman of respectable standing, and well informed. His especial object, in wishing to converse with me, was to ascertain the scriptural ground on which the Catholic establishes the real presence. He lived in a part of the country where there was no priest. After much preliminary communication, I referred him to the chapters of St. John to which I directed your attention, in my last.

"When Christ said, I am the living bread, is it probable," he asked, "that he was understood to express himself literally by those who listened to him?"

"Not only probable, sir, but certain," was my reply.

"I have always been led to believe that he meant to convey a figurative sense."

"You can no longer entertain such a belief," I replied, "if you peruse attentively the fifty-second, fifty-third, fifty-fourth and fifty-fifth verses of the sixth chapter of St. John." I handed him the sacred volume, and he carefully read over those passages.

"Were I to judge merely from them," he said, "your doctrine would appear firmly established. But is it quite indisputable that the Jews took his words in the literal signification?"

"Not only in the literal signification, but in too

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literal a meaning, sir. For they imagined, that they were to receive and eat the gross body—the crude flesh —as we possess them, in our natural and mortal condition. It was not such a body; it was not flesh in such a condition, which Christ promised to impart, or which we are commanded to eat; but it is the glorious and spiritualized body of Christ, yet substantially and incomprehensibly present."

"In what text do you find that the Jews mistook his meaning?" asked the stranger.

"In the fifty-second, sir; where you read these words: "The Jews, therefore, strove among themselves, saying: how can this man give us his flesh to eat?"

"It was not true, then, that Christ intended to give his flesh?" he insisted.

"It was not true that he intended to give it in the gross manner in which they understood him. It was not true that he meant his flesh to be eaten, (that I may use the terms of St. Augustine,) like meat bought at the shambles. But yet it was true, that he intended to give his flesh in a supernatural and sacramental manner. For, he insisted on the subject. 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye eat of the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you . . . . . My flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.'"

"All this appears quite true," my visiter returned, "were we to proceed no further in the chapter: but

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there is a text, a little lower down, which, if I am not very much mistaken, does away with the whole of the literal bearing of Christ's preceding language. At least, I am sure it is, generally, quoted by those who dissent from your Church, to prove the Scriptural propriety of their acceptation."

"I anticipate the triumphant text, sir," I replied. 'It is the sixty-third verse, is it not?"

"Yes, sir; a verse which clearly states that the eating of the body of Christ, and the drinking of his blood, were to be interpreted figuratively."

"That verse," I urged, "does not convey that sense, quite so clearly. 'It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing. The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life.' There is nothing to induce a merely FIGURATIVE meaning—something to enforce a SPIRITUAL doctrine. It is important to distinguish between these two terms, spiritual and figurative. While we reject the latter altogether, we adopt the former, properly understood. We believe that Christ intended to give his body and blood, in a spiritual, yet substantial manner: we believe that we really receive that body and that blood sacramentally. The Jews, as I before remarked, understood him to promise as their food his body, and as their drink his blood, in a gross and mortally-carnal manner. It was to rectify that mistake—to spiritualize their earthly notions—to impart a proper conviction on the subject—

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that he expressed himself as he did: 'the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life.'"

"You deem it certain, then, that, by the explanation which the Saviour gave in the above-cited words, he did not intend to convey the modern doctrine—the doctrine of a figurative presence?"

"The whole Christian world was convinced, for fifteen hundred years, that he did not explain away the tenet which the church insists on, to-day, of his real presence. Remark, sir, I conjure you, how those very men, who murmured, in the first instance, and who exclaimed, THIS IS A HARD SAYING, after what you term the explanation by the Redeemer, abandoned him.—Read the sixty-sixth verse: 'From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.' Now, let me ask you, would they have forsaken him, had he satisfied them that they were under a delusion with regard to the substance of his meaning? If he had said: you misapprehend my language; I do not intend that you should receive my body and blood at all, but merely the bread and wine—emblems, figures, symbols of them—to be taken in faith, would they have abandoned him?"

My visiter seemed staggered; for a considerable time he was silent, and wrapt in thought.

"This is the strongest argument," he then said—"the strongest argument—" and abruptly paused again. "But, my good sir," he added, "I am intruding upon

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you at a very late hour; if you will do me the favour to answer my letters, I will trouble you in writing on this subject, which, I must now confess, I have not thoroughly studied."

"It will afford me pleasure to contribute, in any way, towards your information on this great question," I returned.

"You shall, then, hear from me soon—very soon," he said: and, thanking me for what he was pleased to call my kindness in answering his interrogatories, he bade me good night.

I know not whether the gentleman, whose interview with me I have briefly noticed, will avow himself a believer in the real presence. You, I am sure, will weigh well the arguments thus far adduced, and follow on, with a serene and inquiring spirit, in the prosecution of the subject. I am no prophet, but the result may be predicted. You will not struggle against conviction: you will glory in the humiliation of your intellect before the majesty of TRUTH.

L'opra e si bella, che nel suo splendore
Tuto si perde il debil guardo mio;
Ne in ciel, ne in terra immaginar poss'io
Cosa piu degna d'immortale onore.

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LETTER LX.

Well may I ask you, as the Redeemer asked the twelve, after some of his disciples had abandoned him, "Will ye also go away?" Will you, also, continue to doubt on this subject? Will you also look upon the saying of Christ as hard? Will you, also, refuse to yield assent to the promises of him, who can perform what the minds of creatures cannot understand? No; with Peter you will reply, with the deepest emotions of conviction: "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life."

But, we have proceeded a very short distance, as yet, over the field of this almost boundless topic. Having glanced at the promise, it is our duty to investigate whether there is any record in Scripture of that promise having been fulfilled.

The Apostles must frequently have thought of that important promise. Most anxiously must they have looked forward to its fulfilment: often, among themselves, must they have conversed on the subject. "Are we, then," they must have said, "to be so highly favoured as to receive the real body and blood of our Divine Master! Did he not clearly assure us that this was, one day, to be our blessing? Did not some of our companions forsake him because they could not conceive how it was possible? And we continue to cling to him, with the conviction that he could and

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would effect, no matter how incomprehensible, what he promised."

One year elapsed, from the time when he made this promise, until its fulfilment. The hour, which he longed for, arrived at length: it was on the eve of that tragic event which was to shroud the world in darkness, and burst asunder the gates of heaven, so long closed against the fallen race of Adam. The Redeemer was about concluding his ministry, and on the point of returning to the bosom of his Father. He announced his death. He declared, that one of his own disciples would betray him—but denounced wo upon him, and declared that it would have been better for him had he never been born.

But, turn to the narration as you find it in the twenty-second chapter of St. Luke:

"And he took the cup and gave thanks, and said: take this and divide it among yourselves. . . . .

"And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, this is my body which is given for you. . . . .

"Likewise also the cup after supper, saying: this cup is the new testament in my blood which is shed for you. . . ."

He had eaten that supper which he had so anxiously longed to take with his disciples; the last which he was to eat with them. He was on the eve of consummating the sacrifice which was to redeem mankind;

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and he accomplished the promise which he had made, and which had scandalized the Jews, as it scandalizes so many Christians of the present age—to give his own body and blood to his disciples.

Who cannot conceive the sentiments—who cannot imagine the expressions—of the Apostles, on this solemn occasion? The change of water into wine at Cana—the multiplication of the loaves and fishes in the desert—the solemn promise made in the sixth chapter of St. John—all returned, with the deepest convictions, to their minds. The infidelity of some of their brethren, the reply of Peter; the omnipotence of their Divine Master, were remembered: and they were prepared for the event which took place at the last Supper.

Yes; the connection between the words recorded in the promise, and those repeated in the institution, is striking. "There," as the profound Bishop of Meaux remarks, "there to EAT, here to EAT: there to DRINK, and here to DRINK; there FLESH, and here FLESH; there BLOOD, and here BLOOD: There to EAT and DRINK the FLESH and BLOOD separately—and here the same thing." "My flesh," Christ said, "is meat indeed." In the institution: THIS IS MY BODY. "My blood is drink indeed"—THIS IS MY BLOOD.

Is this not solid reasoning? Can you perceive in this any thing that is not perfectly ingenuous and consistent with the rules of rational logic? You will not regard the sickly lamentations of certain writers, who,

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no matter what an ostentation they may make of legendary research, labour, it is manifest, under a monomania of prejudice.

You, to whom Heaven,
In its benevolence divine,
A noble soul, a candid heart hath given,
Will kneel before TRUTH'S shrine;
Heedless of those wild efforts which are made
To throw around her tenets the deep shade
Of prejudice; through all, you will perceive
The folly of their labours—and believe.

LETTER LXI.

The words of the Institution, the accomplishment of the Redeemer's promise, are so evident, and so striking, that Luther himself could not but acknowledge the truth of them. In his letter to the inhabitants of Strasburgh, he declares, that they would have greatly delighted him, if they could have supplied him with some good reason for denying the real presence; because it would have fallen in better with his design of inconveniencing the Papacy. Volume vii. page 501, edition 1520. "Carlostadius," writes the Bishop of Aire, "proved a bolder man than his master. He was the first to deny the real presence." But, notwithstanding

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his independent step, the merit of renewing the sacramentarian heresy was awarded to Zuinglius. At the head of a Synod held at Zurich, in 1525, composed of two hundred citizens, he decreed, in defiance to the thunders of Luther's vengeance, that in the words, THIS IS MY BODY, a merely figurative meaning should be admitted.

From this epoch, a civil war broke out among the reformers. Every battery was exhausted—of abuse, menace, excommunication—every species of artillery —controversial, spiritual, oral, written, public and private, was seen to flash, and heard to thunder.

"How are we to hold our peace," exclaimed Luther, "while these people disturb our churches, and attack our authority?"—And, in a burst of candid eloquence, he declares, that "there is no medium—either he or they must be ministers of Satan."

The Zuinglians contended, that their interpretation was correct, and, consequently, that they were not Satan's ministers. They argued, that there were other passages in Scripture, which, though bearing a literal declaration, manifestly contained a figurative meaning. And these very passages are adduced, constantly adduced, by our opponents, at the present day. Let us examine the most prominent among them.

"*I am the vine*"—thus Christ, 'tis often urged,
In figure, his disciples deigned to address:

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And any mind in darkness would be merged,
That sought a literal meaning to express
From the Redeemer's words: So, when he says
"This is my body," 'tis in figure meant:
'Tis but a symbol given, through all days
His passion and his death to represent.

This is inculcated as an unanswerable objection—let us see whether it may not be answered.

When Jesus says, I AM THE VINE, he explains his meaning, by asserting, at the same time, "ye are the branches," and that his "Father is the husbandman." Common sense teaches the most superficial reader, that when he denominates the Eternal Father a husbandman, he uses a metaphor.—So does he express himself metaphorically, when he calls himself the vine. No other interpretation was ever attributed to these words.

In like manner, when he says, "I AM THE DOOR," no one could possibly derive from his expression any other than a figurative signification. The terms explain themselves—the whole parable, from the beginning of his discourse to his disciples, as recorded by St. John, chapter the tenth, is couched in language which strikes, at first sight, every comprehension, and is referred, without the least exertion, to its proper import.

But different, very different, is the case in regard to the words, "THIS IS MY BODY." Does it not strike you, as by no means analogous with the former? In the former, the Divine Redeemer did not, in placing

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his hands upon a particular vine, declare: THIS is myself; or upon a particular door, and attest: I am THIS door. In the latter case, he took bread into his hands, and said, THIS is my body.

Again, all mankind have unanimously agreed in admitting the former word figuratively: the vast majority of men of all times and climes, have explained the latter literally. This is an important remark, which merits the gravest consideration of the inquirer. If the objections which are commonly adduced by our opponents be so "convincing," as your friend Laurentia insists they are, how does it happen, that so many ages, and generations, and people, and tribes, and tongues, have not felt their conviction! How is it, that among the great and wise, the learned and pious, of our own century, and our own country, so many still adhere to the literal meaning, in spite of the conviction which these texts seem to produce on the minds of Laurentia and her ministers. Speak to her on the subject. I cannot but believe that a person of her good sense, and sound judgment, and love of truth, will feel the force of the arguments, and acknowledge the insufficiency of the objections. Another difficulty yet remains, which shall not be forgotten, when I write again.

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LETTER LXII.

Yes, I well remember, the shades of your park, and the green promenade along the crystal lake. They did not require the fresh and facetious colouring of your pencil: though that has given them another charm. Yes, I remember your aged but sensible servant—his awkward but straight-forward deportment—his earnest and antic manner—they revive to nature under the influence of your description. And, then, the nasal gravity of the little traveller in black—his wig—his rozinante—his arguments—his everything. Would you believe, that, after the conversation we had with him, when Cæsar introduced him as a minister of the Gospel, he actually brought to me a highly respectable person, "who," he said, "could stand against any Papist in the world."

"Do this in commemoration of me," was the burthen of the little man's song: and, although silenced in some measure, for a time, by my refutation of his quaint objection, still he could not be defeated; for

"E'en though conquered, he could argue still."

And, if he dared not argue, he could find another to argue for him.

"Good morning, Deacon," said he, walking into my room, the other day, accompanied by the Rev. Dr. ——— "we didn't exactly agree the last time we talked over

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matters. Here's Parson ——, who can prove to you that Christ gave the bread and wine in remembrance of him."

"Good morning, Sir," and with the most strained exertion, could I preserve anything like the gravity which the occasion demanded,—"I am very happy to be acquainted with Dr. ——," I continued. "If he can convince me that I am in error, it will be my duty to yield to truth." "You will excuse my rather intrusive visit, dear Sir," the Doctor said, "my neighbour, and brother in the Gospel, requested me to meet you on the subject of the Eucharist; particularly to discuss the words: "Do this in remembrance of me."

I will not picture the details of the disputation which we warmly carried on, during nearly two hours: I will merely send you the substance of my argument. Upon the "little man himself" they were lost—upon his theological companion, they made, I fear, no salutary impression: for, the former came to witness the triumph which the latter promised he would achieve.—"Io triumphe."

I stated, that the words "Do this in commemoration of me," were never thought to affect the literal meaning of the declaration, "this is my body," until Zuinglius discovered the wondrous fact. Do you not see that there are two distinct propositions? If the former be meant to be enforced in its literal acceptation, the latter cannot alter that meaning. Now, I have shown that

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the one was taken literally, by all Christians, down to the days of Zuinglius—consequently, the latter cannot change, in any manner, the universally-adopted acceptation of the former. "Hoc fac" cannot alter the meaning of "hoc est."

"The "little gentleman's" companion argued, that we must form our faith upon the Scriptures: and they command us to DO THIS merely in remembrance of Christ."

But, it was almost farcical to observe the features of the former, when I remarked—what is known to few, by the by—that the first Evangelist who wrote, and for many years the only one, unequivocally records the first proposition, and makes no mention of the second. St. Matthew does the same. Now, when the Christians read their Gospels, they did not find any modification which Zuinglius and his disciples have since invented. They read the Scriptures as they found them: they understood the declaration of Christ, "this is my body," as we understand it.

"Give me the Bible," he exclaimed—"have you got a Bible, Sir? Are the Catholics permitted to have a Bible—let me see it, Sir."

After much ranting, and the usual rhodomontade of the periodicals, which are styled "religious papers," I presented him two copies of the Bible in English: our version, and that one in use in the Protestant church. I knew it would be folly to open to him a Greek or

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Latin volume. "Here, Sir," said I, "is the Bible—examine for yourself."

From his own research into the proposition I stated, he could not deny the truth of it. He saw, that the only Evangelist who adds the words concerning the "commemoration," is St. Luke: that St. John, who related the particulars concerning the promise of Christ, says not a word about the institution—of course, nothing about the "commemoration." And, if St. Paul mentions the words of Luke, it is not with the the intention to alter the signification of the first proposition; —but they form a second proposition, explanatory of the dispositions which should distinguish those who "eat and drink."

The Doctor listened to my arguments with some attention. But the "little man" could not, it would seem, apprehend their drift, much less feel their force. He possessed, under his powdered wig, an imagination so excursive, and so allied to air, that it could dwell upon naught—but floated about in the clouds. His motto ought to be the line of the Roman lyric:—

"Sublimi feriam sidera vertice!"

or rather, as he does not understand Latin, that Popish, idolatrous language, he should adopt this paraphrase:—

"The earth I leave to vulgar people,
And crack *my* brains against the steeple!

Poor fellow! I fear those sublimely-tending brains

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of his have long since been jeopardized. And such is the man who would fain challenge me to a theological tournament.

LETTER LXIII.

"The Father of the Reformation," as Luther is sometimes styled,—yes, that same man, who afterwards rejected the Mass as idolatrous, at the suggestion of a spirit not from heaven surely, at one period of his inconsistent career vindicated the literal signification of the words now under investigation. In one of his strains of vanity, he writes thus: "The Papists themselves are obliged to give me the praise of having defended, better than they, the *doctrine of the literal sense:* and I am certain, were they all melted up together, they would not be able to support it as ably as I do." This passage is taken from his Epistle to Hospinian, written in 1534.

"It is as indifferent to me," he again writes, in his *Short Confession*, "whether I am praised or blamed by the frantic Zuinglians, or other such people . . . . for being near unto death, I am desirous of carrying this glory and this testimony to the tribunal of Jesus Christ, that I have with my whole heart condemned Carlostadius, Zuinglius, Œcolampadius, and other fanatical enemies of the Sacrament; together with all their disci-

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ples who are at Zurich: and every day in our discourses we CONDEMN THEIR HERESY, full of blasphemy and impostures."

Have you ever read the famous confession of faith which Beza and Farel were commissioned to carry to Worms—the Confession of Augsburgh? If you have not, you will be much surprised to learn its contents regarding the Eucharist. It is there stated, "that, in the Lord's Supper, are received not only the benefits of Jesus Christ, but his *substance even and his own flesh.* That the body of the Son of God is not proposed to use it in figure only and in signification symbolically as a memorial of Jesus Christ, absent, but that he is truly and really made present with the symbols, which are not simple signs. And if we add that the manner in which this body is given to us is symbolical and sacramental, it is not that it is merely figurative, but because, under the species of visible things, God offers us, gives us, and makes present for us, together with the symbols, *that which is there signified to us.* This we say, in order that it may appear, that we retain in the Lord's Supper the presence of the true body and blood of Jesus Christ, and that, if there remains any dispute, it will no longer refer to *anything but the manner.*"

This passage needs no comment. Would that it could awaken in our dissenting friends—in Laurentia,

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for instance—all the attention which it certainly deserves.

In the Church of England the same doctrines have been supported. The proudest names in that church can be arrayed in vindication of them: and, eclipsed by such lights, all the lesser stars of the modern church hide their diminished heads. They are as pale as the stars when the moon is up:

"Velut inter ignes
Luna minores."

"You and I," thus Bishop Ridley addresses the Catholics in the reign of Edward VI. "agree in this: that in the Sacrament is the very true and natural body and blood of Jesus Christ—even that which was born of the Virgin Mary, which ascended into heaven, which sits on the right hand of God the Father, &c. We only differ in the manner of being there."

This extract is taken from Ridley's Confession, as related in the Acts and Monuments of John Fox, page 159, &c.

Hooker, in his *Ecclesiastical Polity*, writes thus: "They grant that these holy mysteries received in due manner, do instrumentally both make us partakers of the grace of the body and blood, which were given for the life of the world; and besides also impart unto us, even in a true and real, though mysterious manner, the very person of our Lord himself, whole, perfect,

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and entire." Book v. section 67, page 360. London, 1617.

James I., and Bishop Andrews, in the answer to Bellarmine, declare: "We believe, no less than you, in a true presence."

Let us next interrogate Bishop Montague on this subject. In the contents of chapter xxx. of his Appeal, I find the following:

"A *real presence* is maintained by us.

"The difference between us and the Popish writers is only about the *modus*, the manner of Christ's presence in the Blessed Sacrament."

"Agreement likely to be made, but for the *factious* and unquiet spirits on both sides. *Beati pacifici!*"

In the body of the chapter is the following passage: —"concerning this point, I said, and say so still, that if men were disposed, as they ought, unto peace, there need be no difference. And I add a reason, which I repeat here again; the disagreement is only in *de modo presentiæ*, (the manner of the presence,) the thing is yielded to on either side, that there is in the holy Eucharist a real presence."—*An Appeal to Cæsar*, chap. xxx. p. 288, 289. London, 1625.

Another illustrious Prelate of the English Church, Bishop Bilson, exclaims: "God forbid we should deny that the flesh and blood of Christ are truly present, and truly received of the faithful at the Lord's table.

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It is the doctrine that we teach others, and comfort ourselves withal."

Bishop Taylor, on the real presence, "Collection of Polemical Discourses, New and Old," page 185, 186, third edit. London, 1674, writes thus:

"In the explication of this question, and the manner of the real presence, it must be insisted upon, that it be inquired, whether when we say that we believe Christ's body to be *really* in the Sacrament, we mean *that body, that flesh that was born of the Virgin Mary*, that was crucified, dead, and buried. I answer that I know none else that he had or hath: there is but one body of Christ natural and glorified: but he that says that body is glorified which was crucified, says it is the same body, but not after the same manner. And so it is in the Sacrament: we eat and drink the body and blood of Christ that was broken and poured forth: for there is no other body, no other blood of Christ. But though it is the same we eat and drink, yet it is another manner . . ."

Do the most orthodox portion of the Protestant Communion agree with this learned Prelate of their church?

Let us next consult Forbes: and we shall discover, from his work on the Eucharist, that "the doctrine of those Protestants seems most safe and true, who are of opinion, nay, most firmly believe, the body and blood of Christ to be *truly* and *really*, and *substantially* present in the Eucharist, and to be received by the faithful;

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but that the manner of his being there is incomprehensible in respect to human reason and ineffable; is known to God, and not revealed in the Scriptures."

Cosin's testimony is still more forcible: one, to which Laurentia never will subscribe, strict Protestant though she be. Perhaps she will almost be tempted to denominate that illustrious man a *Papist in disguise.*

"Of the real presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Eucharist, NONE OF THE PROTESTANT CHURCHES ENTERTAIN A DOUBT." What! does not the Rev. Dr. —— entertain a doubt of it? Nor the pastor of the little church? Nor the followers of him of the ——! And yet Cosin, an orthodox Protestant, in his History of Transubstantiation, chap. 11, part 1, p. 6, London, 1675, assures her and them, that if they entertain even a *doubt* on this subject, they are not in communion with *any* of the Protestant churches! Read this quotation to Laurentia: and let her meditate on the consistency of her teachers.

LETTER LXIV.

Bishop Poinet, one of the successors to Bishop Andrews, in the see of Winchester, shows in his *Dialecticon*, that the Eucharist is not merely the figure of the Lord's body, but also contains *its true and real nature*

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and substance. In confirmation of his assertion, he cites these words of Antonius de Dominis: "I have no doubt that all who believe the gospel, will aknowledge that in the holy communion we receive the true, real, and substantial nature of Christ."

"All who believe in the gospel," therefore, according to this Protestant divine, must necessarily believe in the real presence! Strange conclusion this, in the opinion of thousands who affect to be directed, in all things, by the holy Scriptures—exceedingly dis-edifying, most certainly, to the sacred prejudices of Laurentia—and yet, the Saxon confession, and the Synod of Sandornier, and even that of Bucer, corroborate the position of Poinet: for, they agree in the declaration "that the *true* body and blood of Christ are *exhibited and received* together with the signs of bread and wine."

Add to this the authority of the catechism of the Church of England—beyond all doubt, in the hands of Laurentia. To the question, "what is the inward part of the thing signified?" It is answered: "the body and blood of Christ which are *verily* and *indeed* taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's Supper." What shall I say of Jeremy Collier, who refused to take the test oath, and published his reasons for his refusal? Or of Samuel Parker, Bishop of Oxford, who, with great eloquence and erudition, laboured to procure the abrogation of that oath?

Names like these, hallowed in the registers of fame

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and venerable in the records of the Protestant church, form a chain of argument, through which all the efforts of her modern champions can never break. Every link is strong as it is bright—lasting as it is polished: and he who struggles against it, only exhausts his strength, and chafes under the bit.

I would respectfully suggest to certain Pastors in certain churches—and especially to him of the little chapel—to have the passage relating to the doctrine of the Eucharist, which I have extracted for your information, printed in golden characters on the walls and over the Sanctuary—that the people, when they hear the doctrine styled idolatry by them, might read the sentiments of their early Prelates and primitive writers.

LETTER LXV.

The deep sound of the church clock is ringing through the dense night, pealing forth to heedless man the hour that is past. Solemn, awful, to me, is the note which that melancholy clock just striking, at this still, lone hour, gives of the lapse of time. The plaintive exclamation of Horace breaks upon my soul:

> "Eheu fugaces, Posthume, Posthume,
> Labuntur anni."

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Time fleets away,
(Thus, peradventure, may
The poet's sentiment be given,)
And its mysterious wing
Shall sweep off every thing.
Men shall be driven
Like mist before its course;
And of the human race
There shall be left no trace;
And the world's globe shall smoke beneath its force.

It is our duty to improve the time which is left us, by the pursuit of sacred investigations. It is all-essential, that, ere the last knell tolls for us, we should have left no opportunity unimproved, of discovering the will of the Eternal, and instructing ourselves in his revelations. You have kindly followed me in my arguments corroborating the doctrine of the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist: I now request your attention on the subject of *transubstantiation*.

"Transubstantiation!" methinks I hear Laurentia exclaim, "In the name of the genius of the nineteenth century, and for the sake of the honour of common sense, do not mention the subject!"

We will, notwithstanding, venture upon the topic, and you will be convinced, I am sure, that this tenet is not quite as shocking as she fancies, either to the candid genius of the age, or the attributes of sound sense.

Let us examine, then, whether transubstantiation is possible. Certainly, if transubstantiation has ever

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been effected, it is possible: and that it has been, both in the old and new covenants, shall be made incontrovertible, by referring to the proper testimonies.

Examine the seventh chapter of the book of Exodus, and you will find that Aaron's rod was changed into a serpent. An inanimate thing was *transubstantiated* into an animate thing. What was a rod assumed the nature of a serpent—*became* a serpent.

This fact is admitted by all believers—by Jew and Gentile; Protestant and Catholic. Even the modern reviler of miracles is forced to avow—no matter how incomprehensible—its truth.

"And the Lord spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying: When Pharaoh shall speak unto you, saying, show a miracle for you; then thou shalt say unto Aaron, take thy rod and cast it before Pharaoh, *and it shall become a serpent*,

"And Moses and Aaron went in unto Pharaoh, and they did so, as the Lord had commanded: and Aaron cast down his rod before Pharaoh, and before his servants, *and it became a serpent.*"—Protestant translation, verses eight, nine, ten.

Next, turn to the transubstantiation of the waters of the rivers of Egypt into blood. The Scripture expressly states, that they did not merely appear to be blood—but that they were truly and really turned into blood. See the same chapter of the same book, verses 19, 20:

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"Take thy rod, and stretch out thine hand upon the waters of Egypt, &c.

"And Moses and Aaron did so as the Lord commanded: and he lifted up the rod and smote the waters that were in the rivers, in the sight of Pharaoh and in sight of his servants: and all the waters that were in the river *were turned into blood.*"

Now, if water could be transubstantiated into blood, cannot wine be thus transubstantiated? Cannot the Power that effected the one, effect the other? Remark, too—and this is an important circumstance—that these prodigies were wrought through the agency of men—this transubstantiation was accomplished by the omnipotence of God, through the ministry of his servants Aaron and Moses. What can prevent that same Omnipotence from accomplishing the transubstantiation which takes place upon our altars, through the agency of the ministers of religion! If the latter be reviled by the prejudices of Christians, the former has afforded mirth to the satire of infidels.

Examine now the New Testament, and you will then decide for yourself, whether the senses may not be, of themselves, a fallacious medium of information, with regard to supernatural truths. When the dove appeared over the Jordan's waters, in which the Redeemer was receiving baptism, the eye of man could discern nothing but the appearance of a common bird; but was it a mere bird, indeed? Was that which, with expand-

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ed wings, hovered over the Saviour's head, a dove in substance, or was it God himself—the third person of the Trinity—the Holy Ghost—under the form and appearance of a dove? Read the sixteenth verse of the third chapter of St. Matthew:

"And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water"—(this is the Protestant version)—"and lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the spirit of God descending *like* a dove, and lighting upon him."

Again, when the tongues of fire descended upon the Apostles, on the day of Pentecost, under those tongues was concealed the Holy Ghost—as is distinctly stated in the Acts of the Apostles, chapter second, verse third:

"And there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them."

Christ himself transubstantiated water into wine—you have often read the account of the marriage feast in Cana of Galilee. You remember the poetic lines written on the subject by ———.

"At thy marriage feast, Cana, the Saviour reclining
Commingled his smiles with the joys of the hall;
And if sympathy sat on each countenance shining,
Oh! it shone upon his more resplendent than all."

Well, it was there—amid all the circumstances of a bridal supper—that Jesus, at the suggestion of his mother, changed the substance of water into the substance of wine. St. John has recorded the miracle, in the second

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chapter of his gospel; in the ninth verse we read, that "the ruler of the feast had tasted *the water that was made wine.*"

To refuse to believe this transubstantiation would be to incur the stigma of scepticism. The greatest zealots against our doctrine yield, or appear to yield, implicit credence to the former, little reflecting that the miracle is not less extraordinary, or more seemingly opposed to the testimony of our senses, than that which takes place in the Sacrament of the Eucharist. Inconsistency marks the conduct of too many of the sons and daughters of Adam: it is a cheering vision to discover some, who are beautiful exceptions to the ordinary character of our nature.

LETTER LXVI.

The modern disciples of the Fathers of the Reformation little imagine it possible, that by them transubstantiation was not deemed improbable or superstitious. Zuinglius, writing against the literal sense of the words of Christ, "this is my body," remarks: "If we take the word *is* in its literal acceptation, then those who follow the Pope are right, and we must believe that the *bread is flesh.*—Page 261.

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Beza maintains, that "of the two explications which confine themselves to the literal sense, that of the Catholics departs less from the words of the institution, if they are to be expounded word for word."—*Conferences de Montobel*, 1587, page 52. Geneva.

Hospinian makes the same concession, page 49: "If we must exclude," he writes "all figure from the words of Jesus Christ, the opinion of those who follow the Pope is correct."

Calvin insists upon the same truth, Inst. book iv. chap. xvii. No. 30: and his opinion is confirmed by an entire Synod of Zuinglians—that of Czeuger in Poland. This Synod declares, that the consubstantiation of the Lutherans is indefensible. "Because, as the rod of Moses could not have become a serpent without transubstantiation; and as the water was not blood in Egypt, nor wine at the marriage feast of Cana, without a change, so, in like manner, the bread of the Lord's Supper cannot be substantially the body of Jesus Christ, if not changed into his flesh, by losing the form and substance of bread."

With these authorities vindicating our doctrine, who can accuse the Catholic of being blinded, and priest-ridden, when he says "I believe in transubstantiation?" Luther did not hurl his thunders against the tabernacles of our convictions on this subject. While he attempted to pull down some of the pillars of the temple, he left the altar standing and untouched; and loudly proclaim-

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ed, in the plenitude of his usurpation, that to believe in this tenet would not be an obstacle to salvation. "I permit (*I* permit!) that each one may hold which opinion he pleases; . . . let each one know that he is free . . . to embrace which of the two he pleases!"

Why will not the "Watchmen," the "Essayists," the chroniclers of "Popery," the vain writers of "renunciations," the "committees of publication," and all the other dutiful children of Luther's reformation, grant *us* at least the same liberty which their prototype conceded to *his* contemporaries! We beg leave to assure them all, that *sive velint sive nolint*, "willing, nilling," as the old translation has it—we will enjoy our privilege of liberty of conscience. There are, in this free hemisphere, no Peers excluded from their birthrights, no Commoners deprived of their country's favour, because they conscientiously believe in transubstantiation. By doing so, we adhere to the doctrine of the Fathers and a great number of Protestants, as Grotius acknowledges. We hazard nothing, then. Luther *permits* us to be in the way of salvation by believing it: and Bucer avows that all great disputants dwell upon the difficulties of this point, merely "that they may have a subject for declamation before those who are led more by the senses of the body, than those of the mind."

I will conclude this letter with a beautiful passage from Molanus, whom the Bishop of Aire styles "the pious and learned Abbè of Lokkum." I extract it from

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the *posthumous works of Bossuet*, vol. i., page 95. Amsterdam, 1763.

"I say that the body of Jesus Christ is precisely and substantially the same upon the altar, as in heaven and upon the cross, but that it is there in a different manner. It was on the cross in a natural and bloody manner, whereas on the altar it is in an invisible, unbloody, and accessible manner, but it is always the same body. I acknowledge, therefore, with the Fathers of the Eastern and Western Churches, the real change operated in the Eucharist, expressed by the words *transmutation*, *trans-elementation*, *transubstantiation*, which signifies that after the words of our Saviour have been pronounced, there is found on the altar, by virtue of the union with the sensible species, what was not there before. I mean the person of Jesus Christ."

Will you hesitate to subscribe to this orthodox profession of faith? Remember it is drawn up, not by a Catholic but by a Lutheran—and one, too, attached to the Confession of Augsburgh.—Read it attentively.

LETTER LXVII.

You ask me whether any authorities can be alleged, from among the distinguished writers of the English church, confirmatory of the truth of transubstantiation.

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You are satisfied with the concession of those Protestant authors I have already quoted—and you acknowledge that you are especially struck with the extract from the immortal Abbè of Lokkum; whose very name, however, a certain would-be-deemed learned gentleman of our acquaintance, had the temerity to acknowledge he was ignorant of. What! a polemic, in this age of light and general knowledge, to be unacquainted with one of the most eminent divines of the Lutheran church.

Yes, there are strong testimonies to be found among the writers of the highest repute in the episcopal denomination. Bishop Forbes admits the possibility of transubstantiation. *Bishop Forbes!* another unknown name: among a hundred Protestant books it appears that this author cannot so much as be descried. He is lost in the mist of ages! He is enveloped in darkness! No, he is a burning light in the annals of the Protestant history; and, if he cannot be seen shining through the gloom of years, it is because certain most erudite theologists of our day are blinded by ignorance.*

Bishop Forbes writes thus: "there is too much temerity and danger in the assertion of many Protestants, who refuse God the power of transubstantiating bread into the body of Christ. Every one allows, it is true

* A Protestant Minister, of unenviable reputation, in replying to a part of these letters, declared, that there were no such persons as Forbes or Molanus!

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that what involves a contradiction cannot be done. But as no individual person knows, with certainty, the essence of each thing, and in consequence what does or does not imply contradiction, it is an evident temerity for any one whomsoever, to place bounds to the power of God. I approve of the opinion of the Theologians of Wittemburg, who are not afraid to avow that God has power to change the bread and wine into the body and blood of Jesus Christ." See the "Amicable Discussion," vol. 1. p. 253.

Thorndike, (*Epi* lis 3. c. v.) plainly declares, "that the elements are really changed from ordinary bread and wine into the body and blood of Jesus Christ, mysteriously present as a sacrament, and this by virtue of the consecration, and in no wise by the faith of the receiver." Could a Catholic express his faith in more unequivocal terms, than those of the famous Prebendary of Westminster?

Bishop Montague affirms, in his *Appeal*, chap. xxxi., "that the change is produced by the consecration of the elements." He cites several of the Holy Fathers in corroboration of his position.

Samuel Parker, Bishop of Oxford, defends transubstantiation in the following language: "In the first place then it is evident to all men, that are but ordinarily conversant in ecclesiastical learning, that the ancient Fathers from age to age asserted the *real* and *substantial* presence in very high and expressive terms.

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The Greeks styled it METABOLE . . . and the Latin agreeably with the Greek *conversion* . . . and at length TRANSUBSTANTIATION. By all which they expressed, nothing more nor less than a *real* and *substantial* presence in the Eucharist.—*Reasons for Abrogating the Test Act*, page 13. 1688. London.

Again, page 62: "If they own only a figurative presence (and it is plain they own no other) they stand condemned of heresie by almost all the churches in the Christian world: and if this be the theory pretended to be set up (as it certainly is by the authors and contrivers of it) by renouncing transubstantiation, then the result and bottom of the law is under this pretence, to bring in a new *heresie by law*, into the Church of England."

What will Laurentia say to this? One of her own most eminent Prelates denominates the figurative presence, a new heresy! What will you think of the puny polemics of this age, who attempt to shake the ancient monument of our faith by vociferating abuse to the wind, standing in insignificance at its base, like the wolf howling at the pyramids of the desert. Behold the sooty "Watchman," and the fanatical ——: the one roaring through the night of his prejudices against our doctrine —the other skirmishing against the believers in transubstantiation: both opposed to the very patriarchs of their own reformation—and insulting the hallowed manes of a Forbes, a Thorndike, a Montague, a Parker!

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From many an earnest eye
The scales of prejudice must fall:
When light, descending from the sky,
Will beam upon them, as it flashed on Saul:
Truth then will glitter through the night
Which ignorance had thickened on the sight.

It cannot be,
That men will always yield to those
Whose interest it is to oppose
Their brethren—and to make of Christians, foes.

No, they *will* see—
Delusion shall be scattered like the shade
Before the sun-beams: Faith shall smile, arrayed,
Upon the earth, in hope and charity!

LETTER LXVIII.

We have now, after having consulted some of the most learned divines of the Protestant church, to array before our adversaries the authority of the primitive Fathers. We have a cloud of witnesses in them: and not a dark and doubtful cloud, but brightened, and illustrated, by the halo of their names.

Begin with Ignatius, who suffered martyrdom as early as the year 108; hear him speaking of certain heretics of his day: "they abstain from the Eucharist, and from prayer, because they do not acknowledge the Eucharist to be the flesh of our Saviour Jesus Christ, which suffered for our sins. . . ." *Epist. to the Smyrn.*

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How singularly do those early dissenters resemble others of a more modern date!

Justin, in his Apology to the Emperor Antoninus, the object of which was to give the clearest exposition of the Christian doctrines, writes thus: "Our prayers being ended, we embrace one another with the kiss of peace. . . . . when the ministers, whom we call deacons, distribute to each one present a portion of the blessed bread, and the wine and water. . . . This food we call the Eucharist. . . . We do *not* take these gifts as *common bread and common drink;* but as Jesus Christ our Saviour made man by the word of God, took flesh and blood for our salvation, in the same manner we have been taught that the food which has been blessed by the prayer, &c., . . . IS THE FLESH AND BLOOD OF THAT JESUS INCARNATE."

Origen, in his ninth homily on Leviticus, says, "when you receive the sacred and incorruptible food, when you taste the bread and the cup of life, YOU EAT AND DRINK THE BODY AND BLOOD OF THE LORD.

St. Ephrem (De Nat. Dei, tom III, page 182,) writes in these remarkable terms: "Abraham placed earthly food before celestial spirits, of which they ate. This was wonderful. But what Christ has done for us, greatly exceeds this, and transcends all speech, and all conception. To us that are in the flesh, he has given to EAT HIS BODY AND BLOOD. Incapable of compre-

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hending the mysteries of God, I dare not proceed, and should I attempt it, I should only show my rashness."

St. Hilary, in his Sermon on Fasting, says, "If the word was truly made flesh, and we truly receive this word for our food, how can he be thought not to dwell naturally in us. . . . For it is he that said, *my flesh is meat indeed, my blood is drink indeed.* There is no place left to doubt the truth of Christ's flesh and blood, for now by the declaration of the Lord himself, and according to our belief, it is *truly* flesh and *truly* blood."

St. Gregory of Nyssa, brother of St. Basil, who was styled by the Greeks "the Father of Fathers," has left the following record of his belief, and that of the Christians of his time, (the third century,) "It is with reason then that I believe that the bread and wine in the Eucharist, being sanctified by the word of God, are *transformed and changed* (transubstantion,) into the body of the word—God, . . . &c.

"The bread," he continues, "is at first but common bread: but when it has been sanctified, it is called and IS MADE the body of Christ."—*Discourse on the Death of Jesus Christ.*

St. Chrysostom, among innumerable passages which are fraught with the most stirring eloquence, on the sublime mystery of the Eucharist, has left the following, in his xxiv Homily on 1 Cor.:

"Jesus Christ has given us his BODY to taste and EAT; and this is the last proof of his love, . . . let us

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approach to him, therefore, with fervour and ardent charity. . . . *His body lying in a stable* was adored by the wise men. They came from a far country, and adored him with fear and trembling. It is not now in the stable, but on the altar, that we see him," &c.

These testimonies will suffice, as incontrovertibly evincing the doctrine of the Oriental Fathers: innumerable others might be cited—I scarcely glance at a few—but you may judge of all from the few.

Permit me to suggest, through you, one question to Laurentia and Florentine: though they are deeply tinctured with prejudice against this doctrine, still, if they be sincere, they cannot be offended, when you put it to them: "Whom would you rather believe? Ignatius, Justin, Ephrem, Hilary, Gregory of Nyssa, Chrysostom—or the minister of the little chapel? or Dr. ——, or the "Watchman," or ——?

You smile at the contrast: see, then, on what a solid basis our tenet reposes; and mark the sandy, shifting grounk-word of prejudice and opposition!

LETTER LXIX.

You tell me that a great critic, and very learned scholar, has assured you, that the authorities I have quoted from the Greek Fathers, appear quite *suspicious!*—He

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demands authority from the Latins: and you request me to satisfy you on this point. I will do so, with great cheerfulness; merely observing, *en passant*, that the works of the Fathers, from whom the above quotations are extracted, may be found in the libraries of our colleges, and consulted by any one who can understand them. But we will interrogate the Latin Fathers:

Grajugenumque domos *suspectaque* linquimus arva.

I have before me the works of St. Cyprian, who flourished in the third century: encouraging his fellow-sufferers during the period of a trying persecution, he addressed them, thus, in his fifty-sixth epistle:

"Let us prepare ourselves for the combat, and think of nothing but how we may obtain the glory and crown of life eternal . . . . by an unshaken faith must the true soldiers of Jesus Christ prepare themselves, reflecting that they drink daily the chalice of HIS BLOOD, to the end that they may be the better disposed to shed their blood for Christ."

St. Ambrose, the illustrious Bishop of Milan, in his book *on the Holy Spirit*, chapter xii., writes thus:

"We must therefore say that the footstool is the earth, and by this earth, we must understand the very flesh of Jesus Christ *which to this day we* ADORE *in our sacred mysteries*," . . . &c.

The author of the books on the sacraments, which, for a long time, were attributed to St. Ambrose, and

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which of course, must have been written by a contemporary, expresses himself precisely in the terms of the modern Catholic: (book iv. ch. iv.) "you will perhaps ask is it common bread? but this bread is bread before the words of the Sacrament. After the consecration, from bread that it was, *it becomes the flesh of Christ* . . How is it possible," he continues, "that this bread which was bread, should become the body of Jesus Christ? By the consecration. But, by what words is this consecration accomplished? By the words of our Lord Jesus Christ. . . . . The same by which all things were made. . . . If then the word of the Lord Jesus had power to give existence to what was not before, how much more will it have power to make that which was, still exist, *and pass into another substance?*"

S. Jerome, in his Commentary on St. Matthew, writes: "after the typical passover was accomplished, and Christ had eaten the lamb with the Apostles, he takes the bread which comforts the heart of man, and passes to the true sacrament of the passover: that as Melchisedech, priest of the High God, in prefiguring him had done, offering bread and wine, Christ also should *make present the truth* of his body and blood."

Again, in his hundred and fiftieth epistle, "as for us," he says, "let us acknowledge that the bread which our Saviour broke and gave to his disciples, *is the body of our Lord*," &c.

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St. Augustine, in his work against Faustus, book the twelfth, chapter x., remarks that "the blood of Jesus Christ being upon the earth, has a strong and powerful voice, when all nations, after having received, answer, *amen*, it is so. This is the loud voice of the blood which the blood itself produces *in the mouth of the faithful* who have been redeemed by it." . . .

In the same book he calls the Eucharist "the sacrament of hope which unites the members of the church, whilst they continue to drink *what has flowed from the side of Jesus*."

Commenting on the words of the thirty-third Psalm, *he was carried in his own hands*, the venerable writer argues thus: "But how can this happen to a man? and who could conceive it, my brethren? For what is man that he could bear himself in his own hands? Any man may be borne in the hands of another, but no one in his own. We see not how this can be understood of David in *the literal sense; but of Jesus Christ without difficulty:* for he was borne in his own hands, when presenting HIS OWN BODY, he said *this is my body*, for then he bore his body in his hands."

In another discourse on the same Psalm, he alludes again to the same words, and asks: "how was he borne in his hands? Because *when he gave his own body and blood*, he took into his hands what the faithful know," &c. . . . Plain and satisfactory are passages like these: they set at rest all cavil, bring to light from the

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gloom of past ages, the doctrine of the Fathers, and bear convincing testimony of the unanimous convictions of the early Christians on the subject of the real presence. I know the Zuinglians and their followers have endeavoured to adduce authorities of a contrary description from the writings of St. Augustine. The minister of the little church, would fain make you believe the same. But be pleased to read for him this sentence of Martin Luther, which he wrote a short time before his death:

"The Sacramentarians consider St. Augustine as their protector, because he frequently uses the words sacrament, mystery, invisible sign. In my opinion, the church has not had since the Apostles' time, a more excellent doctor than St. Augustine. But this holy and venerable Doctor is so shamefully distorted by the Sacramentarians that he is brought forward by them as the guarantee and patron *of a heresy* full of venom and blasphemies. For my part to the utmost of my power and so long as God shall spare my life, I will resist it, and will protest that he suffers from their misrepresentations."

In this manner does Luther speak of the Sacramentarians—and of the immortal Doctor of the African Church.

Through many a lengthy volume might I swell
The testimonies of the great and learn'd:
All, speaking from their mausoleums, tell

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How they adored, what modern men have spurned.
They, in immortal characters, have traced
The features of their times—they have inscribed
On records which past years have not effaced,
The spirit which the faithful then imbibed;
Their doctrines, practice, customs—they reveal
What certain sophists labour to conceal:
They, with unrivalled eloquence, explain
Truths, which e'en "Doctors," "essayists" would fain
Identify with superstition. crime—
Such is the wisdom of the present time!

LETTER LXX.

One lovely evening, in Spring, I happened to ascend the Monte Pincio, at Rome, with the intention of viewing the magnificent prospect which presents itself to the eye from that lofty and beautiful situation. The sun was just going down behind the grand cupola of St. Peter's—

"That dome eternal, where the loftiest mind.
Shrinks with amazement"—

Observing a concourse of the higher classes of Romans directing their way towards the chapel of the *Trinita dei monti*, I was induced to follow them, with the impression that some religious exercises were to be performed in that rural and elegant chapel. The altar was decorated with the taste of the noble ladies who constitute the society of *religieuses* in the adjoining

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convent. All the first-blown blossoms of the spring seemed to breathe forth their rich fragrance from the sanctuary. On the platform stood a Cardinal, arrayed in the splendid insignia of his office. The tones of the organ were soft and plaintive, breaking in, amid the sweet voices of the nuns, and forming a chorus of harmony such as might "elevate a mortal to the skies." The bells rang forth a joyous peal; the incense, flung from golden censers, arose, like a cloud of adoration, to the tabernacle, and curled, in aromatic evolutions, about the arches and the columns. The Host, encased in a vessel glittering with precious stones, was raised above his head by the purpled dignitary, and exhibited to the congregation, who, in an attitude of profound veneration, received the benediction of the blessed sacrament. I knelt with the fervent multitude—I, evinced, in my external deportment, the convictions of my mind, and the emotions of my heart—I adored the Redeemer, under the Eucharistic elements.

In the midst of the devotions, a gentleman fixed his eye upon me, as though he recognised me: and, drawing nearer, asked, in a whisper, "whether my name was not ——, and if he had not known me in Paris?"

I nodded in the affirmative.

"And are *you* a Roman Catholic?"

"Yes," was my reply.

"And do you really believe in transubstantiation?"

"I *really* do," I returned.

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He said no more, but abruptly quitted me, and hastened out of the church.

That gentleman, I am confident, was persuaded, that transubstantiation is an invention of fanaticism—or, as some one (I forget whom) styles it, the triumph of absurdity over common sense. He had never read a syllable on the subject. He had been trained up to think of such adoration as the Jew is trained to think of the Christian religion and the New Testament—a mere romance. How many are you not acquainted with, who resemble, very perfectly, the American gentleman in the chapel of the *Trinita dei monti?* As for yourself, in spite of your early impressions, after perusing the testimony I have quoted, you must—and you acknowledge you do—feel an extraordinary revolution in your sentiments, on this very important subject. You will be still more convinced of your former erroneous ideas, after I shall have consulted for you the liturgies of the Churches, Latin and oriental—which have been transmitted to us from the primitive ages. In my next, I will give you the result of my investigations.

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LETTER LXXI.

Think not that it is my intention to transcribe, from the large tomes before me, many long and circumstantial extracts from the various liturgies of the Church. Since my last, I have examined the following, from all of which a few quotations will satisfy you, as to the ancient belief regarding the holy eucharist:

I. The Apostolic Constitutions—written in the fourth century.

II. The Roman Liturgy.

III. The Gallican.

IV. St. Jame's, or the Liturgy of Jerusalem.

V. The Liturgy of Constantinople.

VI. The Alexandrian and Coptic Liturgies.

VII. Liturgy used by the Nestorians; styled the Liturgy of the Holy Apostles.

VIII. Liturgy of Theodore of Mopsuesta.

Take a few extracts, and judge from them whether or not they imply, nay express, in the clearest terms, the doctrine of the real presence, and transubstantiation.

"We offer thee"—this is the language of the first—"our King and our God, this bread and this chalice, according to the ordinance of our Saviour, giving thee thanks through him, for that thou hast vouchsafed to let us exercise the priesthood in thy presence. We beseech thee favourably to regard these gifts in honour

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of Jesus Christ, and to send down upon this sacrifice thy Holy Spirit, bearing testimony to the sufferings of our Lord Jesus Christ, in order *that he may make this bread become* the body of thy Christ, and the chalice his blood. We offer thee," &c., &c.

"Vouchsafe, O Lord," says the Roman Liturgy, which was introduced into England in the year 595, "to make this oblation in all things blessed, acceptable, ratified, reasonable, and pleasing: that it may become the body and blood of thy well-beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ."

In the Gallican Liturgy, in the Mass of the Epiphany, there is this prayer: "that by our fervent supplications, he who changed water into wine, may *convert into blood* the wine which we offer."

"We offer thee," says the priest in the Liturgy of St. James, "this tremendous and unbloody sacrifice, ... this life-giving Spirit who reigneth with thee, who is consubstantial and co-eternal with thee, O God the Father, and with thine only begotten Son, who spake by the law. . . . . Send down at present thy most Holy Spirit on us, and upon these holy gifts, that he, by his holy, kind, and glorious presence, *may make this bread the body of Jesus Christ*, ... and this chalice the *precious blood of Jesus Christ*. . . ."

"We offer thee" (thus the Liturgy of Constantinople, attributed by some to the apostles—by others to St. Chrysostom) "this reasonable and unbloody wor-

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ship, and we beseech thee to send down thy Holy Spirit upon us, and upon these gifts; *make this bread the precious body of thy Christ*—CHANGING them by thy Holy Spirit."

The Alexandrian Liturgy.—The priest says: "O Christ, our God, we thy sinful and unworthy servants adore thee, and beseech thee, that through thy gracious clemency thou mayest send down the Holy Spirit upon these gifts, . . . to sanctify and *make these holy things the Holy of Holies*;—that he may make this bread the HOLY BODY OF OUR VERY LORD GOD and Savious Jesus Christ, who is given for the remission of sin, and life everlasting to him who receives it."

"With hearts full of fear," (from the Liturgy of the Nestorians) "let us all approach the mystery of the precious body and blood of our Saviour. . . . And now, O Lord, that thou hast called me to thy holy and pure altar, to offer unto thee this *living* and *holy sacrifice*, make me worthy to receive this gift with purity and holiness. . . . Repair by new life the bodies which have just been *feeding on thy living body*," &c.

I find this passage in the Liturgy of Theodore of Mopsuesta; "May the grace of the Holy Ghost come upon us and upon this oblation: may it descend upon this bread and upon this chalice; may it bless and sanctify them. . . . May this bread, by the virtue of thy name, *become the holy body* of our Lord Jesus

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Christ, and the chalice the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Which of the Liturgies of the present day is in conformity with the eight ancient ones just cited? Do those who entertain such aversion to the *idolatry*, as they term it, of the Roman Catholic doctrine, give themselves the trouble to inquire whether the earliest Christians were not guilty of believing, as we do, in the real presence? I fear not. I, very much, apprehend, that men are too easily led by appearances; too easily prejudiced by education; too blindly directed by others—to investigate for themselves—to judge for themselves—to decide for themselves. It is a mistake—you know it is—to imagine that Catholics are "*led by the nose*," by their "*infallible*" priesthood. Catholics read—Catholics convince themselves. I speak of the upper classes: and the lower are influenced by the disinterested convictions, not *opinions*, of those who *can* investigate. All are governed by divine authority.

With regard to the Liturgies, there is before me an extract from a work of a distinguished Protestant divine, Bishop Bull—entitled: "Some important points of primitive Christianity maintained." It deserves your attention.

"I add," writes that eminent man, "to what hath already been observed, the consent of all the Christian Churches in the world, however distant from each other, in the prayer of *oblation* of the Christian sacri-

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fice, in the holy Eucharist or sacrament of the Lord's Supper; which consent is indeed wonderful. All the ancient witnesses agree in this form of prayer, almost in the same words, but fully and exactly in the same sense, order, and method; which, whosoever attentively considers, must be convinced that this order of prayer was delivered to the several churches in the very first plantation and settlement of them."

We, therefore, who adhere to the *oblation*, and the *sacrifice*, we who make use of the same words to express our adoration which the "several churches" adopted "in their very first plantation and settlement," we who still believe in the real presence—and transubstantiation, as our forefathers believed, will not be abused out of our venerable tenet—will not resign our privilege of being associated, at this late epoch, in the faith with the earliest and most enlightened followers of the Christian religion.

Yes, though Laurentia smile
When at the altar we adore,
Thou wilt remember this—that while
She marvels, how the rich and poor—
Philosopher and peasant—king,
Courtier, and subject low—can kneel
Before the elements—*we* bring
Ages to vindicate us: we appeal
To generations gone—to ancient days—
And heed not what the modern bigot says.

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COMMUNION UNDER ONE FORM.

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LETTER LXXII.

The proposition of the Reverend Gentleman whom you heard disserting on the subject of the "Cup," is not correct. He stated, you affirm, that "the Catholic church *condemns* the use of the cup." This is not the case. The church merely regulates, as a matter of discipline, what we practice—and declares, that the use of the cup is not essential to the faithful; while she commands the clergy to take both one and the other species. You must distinguish between discipline and doctrine: what is doctrine cannot be changed, altered, or dispensed with. Discipline may vary according to times and circumstances. Now I contend, that the administration of the species of bread and wine is not a point of doctrine; but a mere matter of discipline:—and it is my duty to prove this assertion, from scripture, from authority, and from the testimony of Protestantism itself. From all of which it will be made manifest, that to receive under the form of bread will be to fulfil the essential part of the injunction of Christ, by whom this sacrament was instituted. You will find that he who said: "unless you shall eat of the flesh of the son of man and drink his blood, you shall not have life in you," has likewise said, (as Dr. Milner argues): "if any one shall eat of this bread, he shall live for ever."

By recurring to the sacred scripture, you will per-

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ceive, that the divine institution of the sacrament, if he gave his body and blood under the appearances of bread and wine, at the last supper, communicated the same, on other occasions, *under the form of bread only.* If this can be proved, then the clamour raised against us, on this account, should subside: for, could we do better than follow the example of Christ himself!

Turn then, to St. Luke, chapter the twenty-fourth. Read the account of the apparition of the Redeemer to the disciples, on their way to Emmaus; how they conversed together of the things which had taken place in Jerusalem—and how "while they communed together and reasoned," they were accompanied by him who had risen from the dead, until they reached the village. See how they "constrained him to remain with them, and how he went in to tarry with them."

Then pay particular attention, when you arrive at the thirtieth verse; it is as follows: "And it came to pass as he sat at meat with them, he took bread and blessed it, and brake and gave to them."

There is no mention made of the cup. He administered to them the Eucharist, in the breaking of the bread, as all the earliest commentators remark, under this form only—consequently one form is sufficient.

The Acts of the Apostles record, that the faithful, at Troas, met on the first day of the week to BREAK BREAD. See the twentieth chapter and seventh verse. —No mention whatever is made of their receiving the

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"cup": under the form of bread they communicated—as the Catholics do at the present day.

The same is mentioned of the primitive converts from Judaism, in the second chapter of Acts, forty-second verse." They continued stedfastly in the doctrine and fellowship of the apostles, AND IN BREAKING OF BREAD. Here, too, it appears, but one species was received by the faithful.

The language of St. Paul, in his first Epistle to the Corinthians, chapter eleventh, verse twenty-seventh, implies the discipline, even at that early day among the converted Gentiles, of taking communion under one form only. "Whosoever shall eat this bread," he writes, "OR drink the chalice of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord."

Is this the proper translation of the original, or does the English bible give the more correct version, by substituting the word AND instead of OR? By recurring to the Greek, and Latin, we manifestly discover the propriety of the former version. The particle H means OR, the particle *vel*, as in the latin vulgate, means OR—and this Catholic translation—I have heard it styled "corruption"—is admitted and approved by no less a man than Beza.

The apostle, therefore, declares, that either by EATING or by DRINKING—by receiving under the form of bread, or under the form of wine, the body and blood of the Lord are taken: for, by receiving either unwor-

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thily, the guilt of profaning the one and the other is incurred by the communicant.

So much, therefore, for the testimony of scripture on this subject: we shall see whether by deriving our custom from such authority, we subject ourselves to the dire charge of distorting the truth, and introducing discipline at variance with the practice and doctrine of the apostolic times.

LETTER LXXIII.

"No one can be a Christian," exclaimed a preacher who has some reputation as an orator, "who does not comply with the Christian duty of receiving under both kinds!"

"*Piano! Piano!* Reverend Sir," I might have answered, "make not quite so sweeping an asseveration. If you examine the records of ecclesiastical history, investigate the customs of the primitive Christians, you would be silent: or rather you would be compelled to acknowledge, that your proposition involves in its denunciation not merely the millions of modern Catholics who do not consider it a binding duty to receive under both forms, but, likewise, the most fervent and enlightened Christians of the second, third, and fourth centuries."

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Yes, I appeal to Tertullian, to Cyprian, to Basil, to Chrysostom, and they inform me, that it was customary for the faithful of their times to preserve the blessed sacrament in their private oratories, *under the form of bread*, which, in case of danger, during the persecutions, was taken as viaticum.

St. Cyprian testifies, that the Eucharist was sometimes administered to baptized infants, by a few drops out of the chalice. I would recommend the preacher to read his book *on the fallen.*

I remarked before, that the church does not condemn the use of the cup—that it is not an article of faith that the laity cannot, or should not, receive it: it is merely the discipline of our age, which, for wholesome purposes, has been established, but which may be changed at the will of the church. To convince you of the truth of this position, I need but refer your attention to the conduct of Pope Leo, in the fifth century, who commanded certain Manicheans to be excluded from the communion altogether, because they objected to the sacramental cup from an erroneous and irreligious opinion. Pope Gelasius required all his flock, as Dr. Milner testifies, to receive under both kinds. In the twelfth century, besides the officiating priests, infants received under the form of wine.

Again, shortly after this period, a portion of Hussites promising to submit to the Church, on condition that

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they might be indulged in the use of the chalice, Pope Callixtus yielded to their wishes.

I find also, that Pius IV., at the solicitation of Emperor Ferdinand, "authorized several bishops of Germany to allow the use of the cup to those persons of their respective diocesses who should desire it." I quote the words of Dr. Milner, *End of Controversy*, p. 242.

The same learned author states, in like manner, that since the reign of Philip, the French kings have had the privilege of receiving under both kinds, at their consecration and death. All the monks of the order of Cluni who served the altar, enjoy the same privilege.

You see, from what has been said, how vague and confused are the notions of our opponents, on this great subject. You will learn to separate discipline from doctrine: the withholding the cup from the laity, from the condemnation of its use. Yes, as we advance, from point to point, in this interesting investigation, I trust that you will perceive rays of pure light emanating from those clouds of mystery, which, before, presented naught to your view but darkness and gloom.

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LETTER LXXIV.

"But," I may be asked, "has the church the power to establish such discipline? Did not the Reformers, in the sixteenth century, introduce the cup, and is not the whole world, with the exception of the Roman Catholics, convinced of the necessity of receiving under both kinds?"

Luther acknowledged the propriety of the established usage, and regarded the change as unauthorized and deserving of condemnation. I care not what motive impelled him in vindicating the old discipline: whether it was the effect of early habit—or the conviction of its advantages—or the spirit of intolerance towards any novelty which did not originate with himself; but certain it is, that he severely reproaches his disciple Carlostad, for having introduced changes into the church at Wittemburg—"with having," in his own language, "placed Christianity in things of no account, such as communicating under both kinds." How few of the children of the Reformation ever heard of this fact! How little do they dream, that, while the Preachers, of our day, vituperate us for laying aside the cup, we are complying with the usage which Luther approved, and the violation of which he so severely condemned!

"The authority of the Church," lugubriously sighed forth an ignorant declaimer, in a set speech against the

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Catholics, delivered before a mob—"what authority does the Church possess!—We will destroy that authority, we will pull down that temple of idolatry!"——

And, yet, could you fancy, that that ranting personage was a dutiful son of Calvinism, and, of course, obedient to her institutions—submissive to her regulations. That self-same divine, therefore, is obliged to respect, as an ordinance of his own church, the discipline which he, so intemperately, satirizes in ours. For, the Calvinists, in a Synod held at Poictiers, in the year 1560, made the following decree: "The bread of our Lord's supper ought to be administered to those who cannot drink wine, or their making a prostestation that they do not refrain from contempt. In this case, the Synod, by its authority, dispense with the cup; at the same time, believing that the Lord's supper is taken, and the Lord's injunction complied with, by communicating under the form of bread. Certain circumstances, they feel, authorize their decision, and that decision proceeds from the authority of their Synod.

Who will, then, deny, that if the cup can be dispensed with by a Synod, under certain grave circumstances, it may be dispensed with as a general regulation, by the authority of the Church. If we incur the reproach of not complying with the institution of the Redeemer, the Calvinists must fall under the same censure. And the unread man, while he denounces us as apostates from the apostolic institutions, must find himself and

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all his holy brethren involved in the same anathema. For, we assure him, and them, that we make the protestation which their Synod required. We solemnly aver that "we do not refrain from contempt."

If you are not surprised at such inconsistency in one denomination, you will wonder, certainly, to discover the same in another, which boasts of the prerogatives which distinguish it. You will be astonished to learn, that the Church in which you were educated—the Church of England—permitted the communion to be taken under one kind. "What! is that possible!" Laurentia will exclaim:—"It cannot be! where is the proof!" You shall have the proof, and the gentleman of the little chapel himself, when he reads it, must admit that it settles the controversy—puts an end to the difficulty—and must silence all the clamour which has been raised about refusing the cup to the laity.

Burnet, in his history of the Reformation, part second, page 41, and Heylen in his history, page 58, both record an act of the British parliament, passed under the sanction of the Church, providing that the communion should be commonly delivered and ministered under both kinds, unless necessity did otherwise require.

Whence I argue thus: Communion under both kinds is either indispensably necessary, or it is not. If it is indispensably necessary, then no authority on earth could, under any circumstances, administer it under one

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kind. If it is not, then the Catholic Church may permit it, or may not, according to times, places, and circumstances. But, from the regulations of the Synod of Poictiers, and the decree of the parliament of Great Britain, it evidently appears that it is not, at all times, indispensably necessary; therefore the Catholic Church should not be condemned for not allowing the cup to the laity, actuated in her discipline by the wisest motives, and convinced that necessity does require that all should not participate in the chalice. Can any thing be more plain? Laurentia herself, I think, will be not a little confused at this argument. Upon you it will have its effect. It will show you the wisdom of the Church, and the sublime consistency of her conduct. You will admire her more and more: and admiration will, there is every reason to hope, produce conviction. Oh! that the world were influenced by pure motives! Prejudice would cease to torment the unwary, bigotry would be banished from the earth, Faith would shine, like the day-star, in every bosom, and Truth, and Charity, and Hope would reign in every heart.

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THE POPE.

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LETTER LXXV.

The new notion that there exists a conspiracy against the liberties of the United States, is without a parallel in the annals of romance. It seems to be the last effort, almost too marvellous, alas! for the taste of the American people, of a haunted, sickly, dreaming imagination! A conspiracy among all the clergy, native as well as foreign, of the first as well as of the second order; deeply, systematically, fearfully entered into with the Emperor of Austria, and the Pope, and the exiled kings of Europe? *Quousque tandem*———The object of which is to subvert the liberties of America. The posterity of Carroll are labouring to destroy the work of his patriotism! The sons of Maryland, whose ancestors opened their arms to Christians of all sects, and proclaimed universal toleration, are now engaged in forging fetters for their brethren, and combining, with a foreign monarch, to enslave a whole Republic! A new stratagem this, to rouse up the ignorant, and to influence the prejudices of the vulgar. But, the texture in which the design is concealed, is so light, that it requires no besom to remove it:—the weakest eye may penetrate it, and the dullest mind detect the lurking imposture.

We believe in the supremacy of the Pope, therefore we are "subject to a foreign master!" We believe the Pope to be the successor of St. Peter—therefore we

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have conspired with Austria against our own native country. We acknowledge a spiritual jurisdiction in the Roman Pontiff—therefore is he our temporal Lord! All the popes have not been distinguished for the virtues, moderation, humility, which should adorn their persons, therefore the Pope is little better than antichrist! Preposterous conclusions these! And, yet, are they gravely made to flow from premises, in which they cannot be found: and that, too, by men who would not be pleased not to be reputed among solid reasoners; among the philosophers of the age.

We enter upon a most interesting topic. We are prepared to face the bug-bear, to brave the imaginary spectre, to encounter the unpopular subject. They who have armed themselves, in frowning panoply, against it, will be made to resemble the famous Knight of La Mancha, in whose vision, wind-mills became giants, and sheep bristled into a field of spears! He who dreamed of a "conspiracy" may fancy himself a captain in Israel, raised up by the special goodness of Heaven to save the people. He may range along the brook, a visionary David, seeking, in its pellucid waters, for a pebble, which he will aim, in terrible simplicity, at the head of the Roman Goliath, and stretch him all bloody, gasping, writhing, agonizing, upon the sward. But, is it a mere dream—a feverish dream.

"Velut ægri somnia vanæ
Fingentur species———"

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It will not be very long, I trust, ere you will be perfectly of my opinion.

LETTER LXXVI.

The Pope antichrist! And Florentine earnestly believes he is: and nothing can persuade her to the contrary! And why? Because her minister applies to him the character described by St. Paul, in the second epistle to the Thessalonians, ch. 2. v. 4: "He opposeth and is lifted up above all that is called God, or that is worshipped, so that he sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself as if he were God." These words would, indeed, be applicable to the Pope, if he did claim to himself any of the attributes of the Deity. If he did, really, require the worship of his idolatrous subjects —or if he even deemed himself more than man, not obnoxious to human frailties, or unable to commit sin.

Instead of this, the Pope acknowledges himself a sinner, "in thought, word, and deed;" this he humbly avows at the foot of the altar—whenever he commences the mass—to God, to the Saints, and the whole world. He is bound by the common law of confessing his sins to a Priest: and, he can no more dispense himself from that obligation, than the lowest peasant of Campagna. He places all his hope in the merits and

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passion of Christ, through whom he looks for the reward promised to the good and faithful. He feels that the higher his station, the more awful his responsibility: and the neglect of his duties will be visited most "powerfully" on his soul, in the world to come. In a word, he is convinced, that he may be condemned hereafter, while his meanest subject may be crowned in heaven. Does this look like raising himself above "all that is God?" Does this *convince* Florentine that he is marked with the character of antichrist!

The sensible Catholic views the Pope as the chief Bishop of the Church, endowed with a merely spiritual jurisdiction, which cannot interfere with the laws and privileges of any country. He would be bound to oppose any encroachment which might be meditated on the rights of government. He is guided by the golden maxim: "Whoever is not faithful to his country cannot be true to his God." He acknowledges no power whatever in the Pope to absolve from the oath of allegiance, or annul the obligation of citizen to citizen, whether Catholic or heterodox.

He does not believe, as an article of faith, that the *Pope is infallible*, in his official capacity: he is *obliged* to believe that, in his private character, he is perfectly fallible, and prone to evil, like all the other children of Adam.

This is our doctrine, on this subject, which is every day, so deliberately misrepresented, notwithstanding all

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our protestations, and solemn declarations. As members of the Catholic Church, we are his spiritual children, we submit to his spiritual authority, we venerate his spiritual character. As Americans, we know no head but the chief magistrate of the United States: we are opposed to the Pope's exercising temporal power out of his own dominions: we arraign his conduct, as we would every other sovereign's, before the tribunal of justice and candour. As a ruler, if he act and govern as a father of his people, we applaud him; if he degenerate into any thing that may savour of tyranny, we condemn him. Judge, now, whether a good and enlightened Catholic, layman or ecclesiastic, could be so depraved in principle, and so recreant to his birthright, and so reckless of the glorious liberties of his country, as to join a foreign conspiracy, to league himself with despotism and intrigue, to subvert them all, and to rear upon their fragments the iron throne of oppression! And, what epithet should be applied to the man, who dares to implicate so many thousands of freemen in so foul and dastardly a conjuration!

" ——————*Quæ tanta insania, cives.*"

What phrenzy, citizens, has seized
Upon the mind of "Brutus?" tell,
Ye, who can tell, how may it be appeased!
Tell who can drive back to its midnight cell
The spectre which now haunts him? if it be
Left to torment him, his rack'd mind will see

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Visions of bones, and blood, and death, and woe,
And skulls of Protestants hung up for show!
The inquisition sated with their blood,
Upon the very spot where lately stood
The capitol.—Up "Brutus"—quench the fire,
Or Meitternich will *fiddle* round the pyre.

What though the gentleman of the little Church do urge, so frequently and so energetically, the impressions which "he cannot rid himself of," against the character, office, and government of the Pope. This proves nothing, except that *he* entertains such impressions! It is, however, to be hoped, that the candid portion of his auditors will first inquire into the subject, for themselves, and then decide—

"Nullius addictus jurare in verba magistri,"

should be the jealous motto of every free American. But I, very much, fear, that those persons who are in the habit of pitying *our* subserviency to the will of Priests, and the imaginary infallibility of Popes, are not altogether emancipated from the influence of injustice, or uncontrolled by the domination of *their* ministers.

To me nothing is more instructive, and, at the same time, more surprising, than to find the greatest Protestant writers—men of undoubted talents, learning, and experience—diametrically opposed to the gentleman in question—and to the vain declaimers of our age. "The Pope is an usurper, an enemy to the advancement of the gospel, an imposter,"—exclaims a certain

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Divine, lifting his eyes, in devout solemnity, to heaven, as though he meant to force down its lightnings upon the Vatican.

"The Pope," writes Sir Edward Sydney, an early and zealous Protestant, "was the common Father, adviser, and conductor of Christians, to reconcile their enmities, and decide their differences."—*Survey of Europe*, page 202.

"The Pope," vociferates some watchman or some essayist, "is the enemy of religion, and the perverter of true faith:" and hundreds of young and old, devoutly assenting, reply amen!—and the proposition is demonstrated!

"No one," writes a celebrated Protestant, Causabon, "who is the least versed in ecclesiastical history, can doubt, that God made use of the Holy See, during so many ages, to preserve the doctrines of faith."

"The Pope," gravely states some Professor in a theological seminary, "is ignorant, depraved, vain, and profligate:" and there is heard a chorus of sepulchral voices bursting forth in exclamation! God save us from the Pope! "The Pope," writes Addison, in his *Remarks on Italy*, page 112, "is generally a man of learning and virtue; mature in years and experience, who has seldom any vanity or pleasure to gratify at his people's expense."

Now, what reflecting mind would not prefer, infinitely prefer, the philosophic statements made, after strict

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examination, concerning the Pope by these, and such like, eminent men, to the hollow misrepresentations, and declamatory assertions of those, who lead the van, in the warfare against Pope and Popery!—Ask Laurentia, whom you have so often heard extolling the classic eloquence, and "curious felicity" of Addison, whether his testimony should not have some weight in the scale of wisdom.

LETTER LXXVII.

Yes, when my mind dwells upon the magnificence of St. Peter's at Rome, it becomes confused at the recollection—it cannot bear the splendour and majesty of that eternal Basilic. Art has exhausted its ingenuity: architecture has accomplished its *chef d'œuvre:* sculpture has done every thing but animate the marble: painting has emulated nature herself: all the hues of the rainbow seem to have been transferred from the arch of heaven upon the massy arches of this Temple. There is a glare of glory, issuing from the shrine of the apostles, which dazzles the mortal eye: there is a mingled beauty and sublimity; grace and awe; light and gloom; which can only be found, amid the gorgeous mosaics, the colossal columns, the gilded walls, and frescos, and basso-relievos, and never-dying lamps, and

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papal mausoleums—which delight, enrapture, distract, the stranger's memory!

It was Easter-morning: and beautifully did it smile, from the dappled east, upon the hills of Rome! The cross on the dome of the Vatican glittered in the beams: the flags streamed from the spires of St. Angelo, while the cannon's thunder roared. The blue vault of heaven rang with the infinite peals of bells swinging on high, and chiming to the honour of the festival. Carriage after carriage rolled up the area, as the fresh fountain leaped into air with joy, and the obelisk of Sesostris witnessed the triumph of the Christian Church! Steeds pressed upon steeds, neighing and prancing under their brilliant caparisons. Cardinals, in full array of scarlet robes, and followed by their suite, appeared:—and patriarchs with glittering tiaras—and archbishops and bishops with precious mitres—and priests with rich copes—and monks with variegated habits—white, black, grey—and nobles, and princes, and ambassadors, and citizens, and strangers—formed a magnificent procession, and waited the arrival of the Pope.

He comes! his young knights with long plumes nodding from their helmets, and their elegant falchions flashing in their hands, precede. The drums beat—the music sounds—strains almost heavenly steal, at a distance, on the ravished ear, and gradually swell on, until they burst, in full approach, upon the crowds who bend

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their knees, and rend the air with acclamations, while the sovereign Pontiff bestows his benediction.

Behold the Father of the Christian world—the visible head of the Christian church! Yes, Pope is synonymous with Father. It is derived from the Greek word PAPA, which signifies father—a word that is lisped by the first accents of filial love.

The contemplation of this display leads us into the great question: "Is the Pope the chief Bishop of the Church—is he entitled to a rank and jurisdiction above the other Bishops of the Church?

I answer in the affirmative: and it is, of course, incumbent on me to state the arguments on which I ground my reply. If I can prove that Peter enjoyed the supremacy over the apostles—that he was made the visible head of the Church—that he established his see at ROME—no further doubt will be left on the subject of the Pope's supremacy. Let us first have recourse to Scripture. You will there find, that Peter was the first to confess Christ's divinity. First to whom Christ appeared after his resurrection. First to preach the gospel to the Gentiles and to the Jews. First in the Council of Jerusalem. First in exercising a judicial authority. First in the enumeration made of the apostles by all the evangelists.

Let us examine each of these propositions in order.

I. Peter first confessed the divinity of Christ. This is recorded by St. Matthew, in his sixteenth chapter,

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verses 13, 14, 15, 16, 17 18, 19. I will quote them from the Protestant version:

"When Jesus came unto the coasts of Cesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I, the Son of man, am?

"And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist; some Elias; and others Jeremias, or one of the prophets.

"He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am?

"And SIMON PETER answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.

"And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.

"And I say unto thee, That thou art Peter; and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

"And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

It was in consequence of the public avowal of Peter, that he deserved to be made the rock, on which the church is built—or in other words, to be made the HEAD of the church.

II. To Peter Christ appeared first.

Read the whole of the twenty-fourth chapter of St. Matthew, and you will find in the thirty-fourth verse

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these words: "The Lord has risen truly and APPEARED TO SIMON."

III. Peter was the first to preach.

Of this, the Acts of the Apostles bear testimony. Consult the second chapter, beginning at the fourteenth verse, and you will read, that "Peter standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words:" &c. &c.

Again, in the tenth chapter, verse 34, Peter first received the Gentiles into the church: "Then Peter opened his mouth and said, of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons," &c.

IV. Peter presided at the Council of Jerusalem, Acts, chapter xv. verses 5, 6, 7, 8, &c.: "And when there had been much disputing, PETER ROSE UP and said to them, men and brethren," &c. After he had finished, there was silence; Peter decided the question, and all submitted—"then all the multitude kept silence."

V. First to exercise authority.

Turn to the fifth chapter of the Acts, and read from the first to the eleventh verse, and you will have no doubt on this question.

VI. The Evangelists all rank Peter first, when they mention the apostles: St. Matthew expressly says, in his tenth chapter and second verse: "THE FIRST, Simon, who is called Peter." The names of the others

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are placed indiscriminately—Peter always first. While the other apostles were scattered through the world, preaching the Gospel to the nations afar off, Peter presided originally at Antioch, the capital of the east; founded the Church of Alexandria, through Mark, his disciple; and, finally, established his see in the very metropolis of paganism, where it has continued, ever since, having changed the temples of idolatry into Christian Sanctuaries. There shall the Vicar of Christ abide. There shall he exercise the authority of his supremacy. There shall all generations recognise the centre of unity—and there shall the successor of Peter be protected, enlightened, and strengthened by HIM, who promised that he would pray that Peter's "faith should not fail."

LETTER LXXVIII.

Thank you, for the kind expressions contained in your last: what affords me much gratification is, that Laurentia had nothing to reply to the arguments which I sent you, proving the supremacy of the Pope, except that the doctrine was unknown to the primitive Fathers of the Church. As for Aurelia—I knew she would be pleased: oh! how blest are you to have formed the strong friendship which binds you to so pious and accomplished a young catholic.

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You request me to send you the testimonies of the earliest Doctors on this subject: and the object of this letter is to comply with your desire. For, though the supremacy of Peter and his successors is sufficiently established from the Scriptures, it cannot be without its utility to open the volumes of the most ancient writers, and read their sentiments on the subject.

In the first age—St. Denis the Areopagite, (whom St. Paul converted,) affirms, as we learn from a fragment quoted by St. John Damascene in his sermon *on the Sleep of the B. V. Mary*, that he and Timothy, were both present at the death of the Virgin Mary: .. and there were also present both James, the brother of our Lord, and Peter the SUPREME and most ANCIENT HEAD of Divines.

In the second age—"All Churches round about," writes St. Irenæus, "ought to resort to the ROMAN Church, by reason of its more powerful principality." And again: "The ROMAN Church is the greatest and most ancient, founded AT ROME, by St. Peter and St. Paul." These remarkable quotations are from Book third, chapter third, against Valentinus.

In the third age—Origen says: "When the chief charge of feeding Christ's sheep was given to Peter, and the CHURCH FOUNDED UPON HIM," &c. *On the sixth chap. of the Ep. to the Romans.*

"We hold Peter," writes St. Cyprian, "the HEAD and ROOT of the Church." *Epist to Julian.*

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In the fourth age—St. Basil styles Peter, "that blessed one who was preferred before the rest of the apostles."—*Sermon on the Judgment of God.*

"Thou art Peter," exclaims St. Athanasius, "and upon thy foundation, the pillars of the Church, that is the bishops, are founded." *Epistle to Felix.*

"He chose Peter," says St. Athanasius, "to be the CAPTAIN of his disciples." *Hæres.* 51.

"Peter," writes St. Cyril of Jerusalem, "the PRINCE and most excellent of all the apostles." *Cateches.* 2.

"The PASTOR and HEAD of the Church," writes St. Chrysostom, "was once a poor fisherman." *Homil.* 55 *on St. Matthew.*

Eusebius says: "He first committed his lambs and afterwards his sheep to Peter, because he made him not only pastor, BUT THE PASTOR OF PASTORS." *Sermon on the Nativity of St. John.*

St. Ambrose, in fine, assure us, "That Andrew first followed our Saviour, yet Andrew received not the PRIMACY, but Peter." *On the Epistle to the Cor. ch.* 2.

In the fifth age—St. Augustine, speaking of the repentance of Peter uses the following language: "He cures the disease of the whole body in the VERY HEAD of the Church." *Sermon* 12*th on the Quatuortense.*

"Again, in his eighty-sixth Epistle, he styles Peter the HEAD of the apostles, and the FOUNDATION of the Church."

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And in his treatise on the hundred and eighth Psalm: "Peter is acknowledged to have carried the person of the church in figure, on account of the PRIMACY which he had among the apostles."

Contrast these authorities, selected from a thousand equally convincing, with which the volumes of the earliest Fathers abound, with the vague, and unchristian-like declamation of a few prejudiced modern writers. These are like the huts of the fishermen scattered about the feet of the Parthenon.—Alas! how little are our dissenting friends acquainted with the history of the past. The awful scrolls of time are rolled up, and the genius of this age disdains the trouble of examining them. I love to consult their records: I feel a solitary delight in penetrating the dense gloom of antiquity, guided on my way by the spirits of the great and holy! They teach me what was taught before infidelity assumed the title of philosophy, and Truth was made less beautiful than error! May we not hope, that the time will yet arrive, when genuine philosophy will assert her rights, and Religion will establish her reign —over error and infidelity? When a Chrysostom, an Ambrose, an Augustine, will yet prevail over a "Watchman," "a Brutus," or a ———.

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LETTER LXXIX.

The sleigh-bells are tinkling through the streets, deeply filled with snow. It is a joyous season. Christmas is hardly gone. The delightful reciprocations of the new year now occupy the thoughts of social men.

> "————————Of music, and ethereal mirth,
> Wherewith the stage of air and earth did ring,
> And joyous news of heavenly infant's birth,
> My muse with angels did divide to sing,
> But headlong joy is ever on the wing."

So sings Milton, in his poem headed "The Passion:" and no one, who has ever felt the charms of a Christmas at home, will hesitate to join in the "ethereal mirth." Every Christian heart thrills with the "glory of God on high, and peace to men of good will."

It is with the hope of restoring peace to the heart of a sincere inquirer after Truth, that I continue this investigation. To you, when convinced of the solemn tenets of our Church, the angel of peace will administer: your conscience will be quiet; your mind will rest undisturbed under the wings of faith: your heart will enjoy a calm, which never lulls the throbbings of one that is anxious, uneasy, and agitated. With the view of effecting this, I resume my correspondence.

My object, in this letter, is to lay before you, eleven passages from St. Cyprian, on the texts from Matthew, sixteenth chapter and eighteenth verse, "Thou art Pe-

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ter, and upon this rock I will build my church," &c. We shall learn from the testimony of this immortal father of the African Church, the doctrine of his contemporary believers, with regard to the Pope's supremacy. Bear in mind, that he flourished in the third century: that he was a Bishop in Africa: and that he was engaged in a controversy on the question of rebaptism with Popes Cornelius and Stephen. His testimony, under all these circumstances, must be unquestionable and conclusive.

I. Peter, on WHOM the Church was built by the Lord, speaking as the organ of all, and answering in the name of the Church, says, *Lord, to whom shall we go,*" &c. Epist. 55.

II. "Peter, ON WHOM the Church was to be built, teaching in the name of the Church," &c. Epist. 69.

III. "Baptism is one, and the Holy Ghost one, and the Church one, founded UPON PETER by our Lord, having its origin and system established in writing."—Epist. 70.

IV. "Peter, UPON WHOM our Lord built his Church, did not attribute anything to himself." Epist. 71.

V. "To Peter, UPON WHOM he built his Church, and in whose person he centered his origin and its unity, our Lord gave first of all, the power to loose on earth, and it should be loosed in heaven." Epist. 75.

VI. The Catholic Church is the mother, origin, and

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root—the first, and only one FOUNDED ON PETER."—Epist. to Fortunatus.

VII. "Letters are carried to the chair of Peter, and the principal Church, where all priestly unity takes its origin." Epist. 55.

VIII. "UPON HIM (Peter) alone he builds his Church, and to him he commits the sheep to be fed. THE SUPREMACY IS GIVEN TO PETER that the unity of the Church, and the unity of the chair may be shewn." On the Unity of the Church.

IX. "Does he who opposes and resists the Church, who deserts the chair of Peter, UPON WHOM the Church is founded, flatter himself that he is in the Church."—On the Unity, &c.

X. "Peter, to whom the Lord entrusted his sheep to be fed and watched, ON WHOM he founded and established his Church." On Virginity.

XI. "Peter, ON WHOM the Lord condescended to found his Church." On the gift of Patience.

Can you now think—can any one who reads the passages quoted, think—that St. Cyprian and the Christians of his day understood the text of St. Matthew otherwise than it is now understood by the Roman Catholic world?

Christ said, thou art *Cephas*, and upon this *Cephas* (the original Syriac in which he spoke)—I will build my Church. Thou art *Petra*, and upon this *Petra*, &c.—Thou art a *rock*, and upon this *rock*, &c.—

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Rosenmüller and Gerard, both very learned Protestant critics, admit this. In French there is no difference between *Pierre* the name of a man, and *pierre* a stone. So that no possible equivocation could exist as to the meaning of this sentence: "Tu es *Pierre*, et sur cette *pierre*, Je battirais mon église."

Let it not be objected that Christ is the head of the Church. Who ever doubted this truth? He is, by excellence and right, the head of that Church which he founded: but, then, he has left a representative on earth —a visible head. God is, of right, the omnipotent master of every kingdom; and yet there is, in every empire, a visible chief—a sovereign, a head. Did not St. Paul declare, in his second Epistle to the Ephesians, chapter the twentieth, that we are *built upon the foundation of the Apostles?* And did not the Redeemer himself, who was essentially the light which enlightened every man who cometh into the world, style his disciples the *light of the world?* (Matt. 5. 14.)

As the foundations of an edifice rest upon the foundation of the earth, so does the rock of the Church repose on the power, and wisdom, and strength of Jesus. And, as the lights of the firmament derive all their splendour from the source of eternal Light, so do the Apostles borrow theirs from the "Sun of Justice,"—the founder of Christianity. Oh! may we find a safe protection from the agitations of life in the everlasting tabernacle supported by the promise of its founder!

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and may our minds and hearts be illumined and warmed by the "lights" which have been kindled up in this vale of time, to cheer and guide us safely onward to the land of bliss.

LETTER LXXX.

"It matters not what perogatives Peter may have been adorned with," thus you tell me, Florentine replied to the arguments in favour of the supremacy, "the Pope cannot lay claim to any of them. For Dr.——— is ready to prove that Peter was never at Rome! And, consequently, that Gregory XVI. has no more right to the title of successor to Peter, than any other Christian Bishop."

She certainly means, that Dr.———is ready to attempt to prove—not to prove. For it cannot be in the power of any one to demonstrate as false a proposition which is true. Much reasoning will not be required to elucidate this self-evident maxim: what is true cannot be proved false. If, therefore, the proposition: "Peter was at Rome," be true, Dr.———loses his precious time in the fruitless effort to subvert it. The testimonies which I purpose bringing in confirmation of it, will determine the question. And Florentine, who asserts, because Dr.———asserts; and denies, because Dr.———denies; and doubts, because Dr.———

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doubts, will, peradventure, be induced hereafter, to examine, reason, decide, for herself.

O Rome! the remembrance of thy basilics and temples, of the glory which dwells upon thy hills, of thy consecrated groves, and magnificent priesthood, fills me with admiration, inspires me with awe. Yes, I see the spirit of religion triumphingo ver the wreck of paganism—and the chair of Peter towering sublimely over the ruins of the imperial throne! The tomb of Adrian is the fortress of Gregory. The Pantheon of Agrippa is the sanctuary of the Virgin. The pillar of Trajan is crowned with a statue of Peter. The baths of Dioclesian are the abode of a community of monks. Every thing here does homage to Christ, to his vicar and his church.

> Where'er I turn, my wondering eyes behold
> Fallen fanes, and fallen "palaces of gold;"
> Yea, ruin after ruin stretches round,
> Fragments of gods and heroes strew the ground,
> While deep in paganism's withered heart
> The Galilean Fisher sinks his dart.
> See how he nods triumphant, where of old
> The imaged Cæsar frowned in massive gold;
> Yes, there he cleaves; while o'er his head on high
> The Christian banners kiss their native sky!

"If Peter had been at Rome," triumphantly ejaculated Dr. ———, "the fact would have been mentioned in Scripture. But no such fact is to be discovered in the sacred volume—ergo!"

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And this ill-formed syllogism, he thinks, overturns the very throne of the Vatican—hurls down St. Peter from the mole of Adrian—and confounds the routed hosts of Popery! Before we consent to these awful consequences, we will examine a little more elaborately into the subject. Is it quite certain that no such fact can be discovered in the Scriptures? I maintain that it is not. On the contrary, there is the most cogent authority to induce the belief that it is mentioned.

In the second Epistle of St. Peter, chapter fifth, verse thirteenth, we read these words: "The church which is in Babylon saluteth you." Now when I assert, that by Babylon the Apostle meant ROME, (pagan Rome was Babylon indeed,) perhaps Dr. ——— will laugh with absolute contempt at my folly: and Florentine, will join in the mirth. As for youself, experience has taught you to search before you pronounce sentence—to investigate before you reject any tenet. While the laugh of "the wise ones" is loudest, let us solemnly consult the best commentators of the Protestant church, on this interesting text.

"On the meaning of the word Babylon," writes the celebrated Grotius, "ancient and modern interpreters disagree. The ancients understood it of ROME; and that Peter was there, no true Christian ever doubted; the moderns understand it of Babylon in Chaldea. For my part I adhere to the ancients."

Is Dr. ——— a good Christian? he not only doubts,

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he positively denies it. Whose testimony will you adopt, therefore? Will you adhere with Florentine to Dr. ———, or, with Grotius, to the ancients!

Rosenmüller, another very learned Protestant commentator, acknowledges the consent of the ancients in similar terms: "the ancients interpret it ROME.

"Veteres ROMAM interpretantur."

Horne, in his Introduction to the Study of the Sacred Scriptures, says: "this opinion is confirmed by the general testimony of antiquity."

And, after mentioning several interpretations of the text now under consideration, he adds: Grotius, Wheatly, Lardner, Macknight, Hale, Bishop Tomline—and all the learned of the Romish communion are of opinion, that by Babylon, St. Peter meant frequently Rome, which city is called Babylon by the apostle St. John." (Revelat. XVII. 18.)

He then concludes with his own opinion: which places him at antipodes with the "modern" Dr. ——— and brings him, on this point, entirely within the pale of orthodoxy.

"From a careful examination of the evidence adduced for the literal meaning of the word Babylon, and its evidence for its figurative or mystical application to Rome, we think that the latter was intended."

Consequently these learned Protestants not only allow that Peter was at Rome, but hesitate not to

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acknowledge that, according to their conviction, in conformity with the general assent of antiquity, the fact of his having written his Epistles from Rome is mentioned in the sacred volume. And yet,

> Is it not ignorance, 'tis said,
> Throwing its dense and baleful shade
> Across the light of truth:
> Is it not error conjured from the tomb
> Of superstition, that the "Pope of Rome,"
> (Who is styled Antichrist forsooth!)
> Succeeds to Peter in that ancient See?
> I leave you to pronounce, when History
> Bears witness, that the apostle lived and died
> In that proud capital—where, crucified,
> Like his own master, he has left a throne
> Which can be ruined with the world alone!

Yes, the earliest writers agree on this point; and it will be my object when I next write you, to select a few passages from their works, testifying to the fact.

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LETTER LXXXI.

The Ursuline convent lies a heap of smouldering ruins! The torch of the incendiary has been applied to the sanctuary, and the guardian angel has fled from the holy place, profaned by the sacrilege of the mob. And there is no alternative: to perish in the flames, or to be driven from a dear and comfortable asylum, upon the cold charities of the world. O justice! whither has thou fled? O honour! the nation's glory, the people's safeguard, where dost thou slumber? O freedom! the boast of our land, where is thy ægis? Why dost thou not cover the heads of the innocent, the persecuted, the helpless, with its protection? O law! thy statutes are burnt up with the abode of virtue! Pity has no tear for them; sympathy exists not for them! —Toleration, liberty of conscience, are they no longer the characteristics of a republic! The Jew may worship in his synagogue—and he is entitled to his religious privileges. The shaking Quaker may quiver under the spirit, unharmed and unmolested. The Moravian may be left in peace and security in his houses of education. The infinite variety of sects that swarm, like locusts, over our land, grow under the influence of universal toleration. But the Catholic Nuns, ladies who devote their lives to the education of children, who seclude themselves from the turmoil of the world in order that they may apply themselves more entirely

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and more leisurely, to their duties—females, delicate, sensitive, accomplished, pious—are not permitted to enjoy the common right. They are misrepresented, insulted;—their ears are assailed by the orgies of obscenity—their solitude is broken in upon by the intrusion of strangers—their peace is disturbed by day, and their slumbers are disturbed by night. One of their own *protegèes*, betrays them—not "with a kiss." An association of publishers is formed, to diffuse abroad the calumnies which she invents. They are pursued from the ashes of Mount Benedict to their hearths at Roxbury;—and, in the face of our common country, and in defiance to our common privileges—they are, at length, exiled from the union, and compelled to seek refuge in the dominions of Great Britain. And this in a land of liberty—and independence—and toleration!

You are anxiously looking for the authorities from the holy fathers, proving that Peter was at Rome: and I now send them in compliance with my promise.

If you will turn back to the fourth Letter, you will find an eloquent quotation from the Homilies of St. Chrysostom, which was there adduced in support of relics, and which is a splendid answer to all the doubts that men can excite in the minds of the unread, with regard to the present topic.

"For myself," breaks forth that sublime father of the Greek Church, "I admire Rome and celebrate it,

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not for the splendour and abundance of its wealth, not for its magnificent edifices, but for those two columns of the Church which it possesses. Oh, who will give me to embrace the body of Paul! . . . this body with that of Peter shall be FOR ROME a more secure defence than towers or walls."

Ignatius, Martyr, who flourished in the first century, thus addressed the Romans: "I do not command you as Peter and Paul did: they were Apostles of Jesus Christ—I am a mere nothing."

Florentine may object, that this passage contains nothing decisive with respect to Peter's having been at Rome, but merely that he instructed them, perhaps by letter. But let her hear one of her own bishops—

"What can be more clear from these words," writes Bishop Pearson, "than that this holy martyr was of opinion that Peter no less than Paul, preached and suffered at Rome?"

Eusebius relates, on the authority of Papias and Clement of Alexandria, that St. Mark wrote his gospel at the request of Peter's HEARERS, IN ROME." Eccles. hist. book 2, chap. 15.

And again, that "Peter makes mention of Mark in his first epistle *written from* ROME, which he figuratively called Babylon."

St. Dionysius, Bishop of Corinth, in his epistles to the Romans asserts, that Peter and Paul preached the

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gospel in Corinth and Rome, and suffered martyrdom in the latter city."

St. Irenæus says: "Peter and Paul preached Christ at ROME, and laid the foundation of the Church." And again: "The greatest and most ancient Church was founded in ROME, by the illustrious apostles Peter and Paul." *Adver. hæres.* book 3. c. 3.

Caius, a priest of the Roman Church, in his book against Proculus, affirms, that he "can show IN ROME the trophies erected to the holy apostles Peter and Paul; the one on the Vatican, the other on the Ostian Way."

Origen writes, that "Peter, after having preached at Pontus, Galatia, Bithynia, &c., went at last TO ROME, where he was crucified." Cited by Eusebius, book 3. chap. 1.

Tertullian speaks, in various parts of his works, of Peter's martyrdom at Rome. The same is recorded by St. Augustine, Cyril, Basil, Athanasius, Orosius, Lactantius, Theodoric, &c.

What doubt can now be left upon your mind, on this very essential point? Can Dr —— create any difficulty by *attempting* to subvert the testimony of the ancients? Tell him, for me, that he loses his time—and places himself in an unenviable position before the tribunal of reason and Truth. "Peter was not at Rome," cries out an anti-catholic, of the nineteenth century.

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"Peter was crucified at Rome in the reign of Nero," writes Eusebius.—"This is *evidently* proved by the monuments," &c. A preacher contending against evidence! A doctor contradicting Usher, Casaubon, Charmier, Blondel, Seldon, Vedal, Hammond, Horne, and other learned men. A liege vassal of the reformation equipped for batttle even against Calvin himself! For, he did not dare deny that Peter was at Rome. No, the unanimous testimony of antiquity was against such a denial: the records of history have the fact indelibly engraven upon their pages; and, after a profound inquiry into the subject, Calvin was led to this avowal: "Propter scriptorum consensum non pugno quin illic mortuus fuerit." Instit. book 4. chap. 6. n. 15.

Rome, therefore, holds the primacy over all the churches. She, once the mother of the superstitions, the follies, the vices of paganism, has become the centre of Christian unity; the metropolis of the Christian religion. Where Augustus once swayed the imperial sceptre, Peter's successor exercises a spiritual authority over the whole world. An authority, however, which does not conflict with the laws and rights of other nations. An authority, that renders more inviolable the obligations which citizens owe to their respective governments; more sacred the allegiance due to their civic heads. With singular exultation may the Catholic exclaim, in the words of Ovid, who thus sings of pagan Rome:

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"Prima urbes inter Divum domus, aurea Roma,
Romanæ spatium est urbis et orbis idem!"

And with more propriety, still, of Christian Rome:

"Rome! thou art first among the cities!—thine
Is the vast empire of the world—"

But, bear in mind, that empire is of a spiritual character. We bow to no temporal power, as I have often insisted upon, in the Pope: we know nothing in him but the chief pastor of the whole flock—the representative of Peter—the vicar of Christ. And, though he has under his command the Roman dominions, uniting in his person the sovereign and the first bishop of the Church, we are subject to him, only in his latter capacity—and would not, on any account, sacrifice the liberties of our republic for the monarchical power of any foreign ruler. We receive the maxim of Christ: "My kingdom is not of this world." In all that relates to the other world, we are subject to that authority which Christ has established. When the Church of England was first formed, did not the king assume the title of head of the church? Are all who profess the doctrines of that church, in the United States, subject to the temporal jurisdiction of the king? I leave you to reflect, at leisure, upon this. The night-winds are moaning about my window, and the thick hail rattles through the frozen branches of the leafless trees.

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THE LITURGY.

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LETTER LXXXII.

The first time you witnessed the celebration of the mass, you appeared to be solemnly imprest by its grandeur and sublimity. You saw, in every thing around you, antiquity and mystery. The robes of the priest; the magnificent ceremonial; the altar; the sacrifice;—all conspired to carry you back to the primitive ages of religion: all bore witness, that the Church traces her institutions and forms through long-gone centuries; that she has nothing recent, but is shrouded, like her author's throne, in awful obscurity.

Oh! how reckless is the tongue, which, when these hallowed ceremonies are performed, dares to whisper, "mummery!" Oh! how profane the heart, that would not be moved to veneration at the sight of those august mysteries, before which have knelt, in sacred awe, the virtue, the valour, the beauty, the wisdom, the wealth, the nobility, of every age! Mysteries, offered before the monarch's brows were crowned with the diadem; before the knight went out to battle; before the virgin breathed the hymeneal vow;—offered on grand and important occasions; in peace and war—in atonement, and thanksgiving—for the dead, as well as for the living.

I once had a conversation with a relation of yours on this subject. He acknowledged, that there is much

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to elevate the mind, and inspire the heart, in the splendid service of the mass: in which, taste, and music, and ornament, and piety, and sublimity, are all contained. But there was one difficulty which he could not easily overcome.

"Extraordinary as the Catholic service may appear," he said, "to a stranger, who witnesses it for the first time, yet, every person who can appreciate solemnity, and magnificent devotion, must be struck with a sentiment of indescribable satisfaction, in every particular—except one."

"Pray, sir, what exception do you mean?" said I.

"The language," he returned. "It is a pity the liturgy is not in the vernacular tongue. The Latin is not understood by the people, and, consequently, much of the effect, which would otherwise be produced, is destroyed.

"Perhaps you have never taken into consideration the reasons which have induced the Church to preserve the Latin language," I replied.

"If she has any special reasons, they are, indeed, unknown to me," he said.—This led us into a more detailed examination of the case: and I will send you the substance of our interview, which may not be without its utility. Your relative confessed himself satisfied.

"I remarked to him, that the liturgy of our church was composed, when the Latin language was common to almost all the world. The people, of course, under-

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stood it—it was their vernacular tongue. The Roman power subjugated the whole world, and the Roman language was introduced, with the arms which enforced subjection. What wonder, then, that the liturgy of the church should have been written in that common language? What wonder that it could not be in English, since it was written centuries before that language was dreamed of?

The Latin is a classic, pure, and unchangeable language: the best adapted to a pure and unchangeable religion. What, if the liturgy should have been fashioned to every dialect, which was introduced by the barbarian conquerors of the Roman empire! What, if the fathers of the church had changed the original language into the jargon of the Vandals and Goths, the Ostrogoths, and Heruli, and Huns, and all the other hordes, that deluged, in turn, the lovely soil of Italy. Who, at the present day, would be able to understand it? Who could rescue from barbarism the elegant prayers of the church, composed in language as chaste as that of the most beautiful writers of Rome? Would there have existed the liturgy, such as it now is, of the English church! Well may the authors of that solemn service thank the ancient church, from whom they derived it all. They knew the Latin tongue: but, if the liturgy had been in the barbaric dialect of the Vandals, who would have been able to "do it into English!"

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Wisely, therefore, it appears to me, does the church act, in maintaining the original language in her liturgy : the Latin in the west, the Greek in the east. It is a glorious thing to reflect on, that the service which we perform, in the nineteenth century, is precisely the same, not merely, in substance, but, likewise, in the identic tongue as was recited by an Augustine, a Cyprian, a Jerome, a Gregory the Great, a venerable Bede, a Thomas à Kempis ; and so many other illustrious and saintly personages. The clergy surely understand what they read, and the laity, of all climes, have correct translations into their respective tongues.

Certainly the Latin language, which is taught in every school, cannot be styled an obsolete language. With the exception of the French, perhaps, there is not another more universally studied throughout the world. In Italy, and Spain, it is understood in a general way, by all classes, in consequence of its near approach to their own native languages ; in Hungary, and the adjacent countries, it is spoken.

Besides, the church strictly commands all pastors "to inculcate the word of God, and the lessons of salvation to the people, in their vernacular tongue, every Sunday and festival throughout the year—*Council of Trent, Sess.* 24. c. 7.—"And to explain to them the nature and meaning of her divine worship as frequent as possible."—*Sess.* 22, *c.* 8.

But, it is said, that the priest prays in silence : and

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even though the people understand the liturgy, they do not join with him in the common prayer. Do those persons who raise this objection against the service reflect, or have they ever read, that the high priest of the Jews was accustomed to go alone into the tabernacle and make atonement, as is recorded in Leviticus, chap. xvi., 17th verse.

Do they forget that the prophet Zacchary offered incense in the temple, *by himself*, while the multitude prayed without? See Luke, chap. i. v. 10. The ceremonial of the Jewish religion was approved by the Omnipotent himself. Will the pious reader of the Bible condemn, in the Christian service, what was practiced in the ancient? It becomes every well disposed person—it becomes Laurentia, and your other friends, to think of this. You are too anxiously inquiring after truth, not to give it all the attention it deserves.

LETTER LXXXIII.

No, the language of the Catholic liturgy is, by no means, an *unknown* tongue; and does not fall under the sentence of St. Paul, in his first epistle to the Corinthians. The apostle makes no allusion to the liturgy of the Corinthians, which was, as it now is, performed in Greek: but condemns, as the learned Milner observes, "an impudent and ostentatious use of the gift of

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tongues, in speaking all kinds of languages: which gift, many of the faithful possessed, at that time, in common with the apostles." St. Paul requires that all things be done *decently and according to order*. And this is the very reason why the Catholic church retains, in her public worship, the original languages employed by the apostles.

She is *universal* in her extent; embracing all nations, tribes, and tongues. What little uniformity and order could be observed, were she to adopt the countless idioms, dialects, languages, of all the regions of the earth? The advantages of an unchangeable language, for religious worship, are priceless: and Dr. Hey, a celebrated Professor of Divinity, in Cambridge, in his lectures, volume IV, page 181, has the candour to admit, that such a one "is fixed and venerable, free from vulgarity, and even more conspicuous." This is an admission which all of our "professors" in Theological Seminaries would not be willing to make.

Dr. Milner, in his "End of Controversy," a work which contains the deepest research, and most enlightened views, makes some remarks on the subject now under investigation, which I cannot refrain from quoting. They bear so urgently in its favour, and are so briefly expressed, that I know not anything which my pen might produce, that could be as convincing to a sincere mind.

I. "Paul himself wrote an epistle, which forms part

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of the liturgy of all Christian churches, to those very *Romanists*, in the *Greek language*, though they themselves made use of the Latin."

II. "The Jews, after they had exchanged their original Hebrew for the Chaldaic tongue, during the Babylonish captivity, continued to perform their liturgy in the former language, though the vulgar did not understand it." He quotes Walton's Polyglot: "And our Saviour, as well as his apostles, and other devout friends, attended this service in the temple, and the synagogue, without ever censuring it."

III. "The Greek churches, in general, no less than the Latin church, retain the original pure Greek tongue in their liturgy, though the common people have forgotten it, and adopted different barbarous dialects, instead of it." He quotes Mosheim, by Maclaine, vol. II., p. 577.

IV. "The Patriarch Luther maintained, against Carlostad, that the language of public worship, was a matter of indifference: hence his disciples professed, in their Augsburg Confession, to retain the Latin language in certain parts of their service."

V. "When the establishment endeavoured, under Elizabeth, and afterwards under Charles I., to force the liturgy upon the Irish Catholics, it was not thought necessary to translate it into Irish, but it was certainly read in English, of which the natives did not understand a word: thus 'furnishing the Papist with an argument against themselves,' as Dr. Hayden observes."

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Having before me, the words of Heyden, which may be found in his history, page 300, I send them to you:

"The people, by the statute, were required, under severe penalties, to frequent at the reading of the English liturgy, which they understood no more than they do the mass. By which means, the Irish were not only kept in continual ignorance, as to the doctrines and devotions of the Church of England, but we have furnished the Papist with an excellent argument against ourselves, *for having the divine service celebrated in such a language as the people do not understand.*"

Ward, in his "Cantos," a species of rhyme which does not fall far short of Hudibras, facetiously alludes to this fact, in the following lines:

"The public mass was put to flight,
As day is banished by the night.
A work performed, not by the dint
Of parson's prayer or argument,
But by a strongly-armed power
Provided by the Queen before.
An easy way to make folk come
To kirk, when summoned by the drum.
Yet, all they heard, when they came there,
Was in strange tongue, a *common prayer!*
Among the Irish, where not one
Knew what they said, but cried *O Hone!*
O Hone! they cried, and shak'd their heads,
With grief to change the mass and beads
For what they knew to be a prayer
No more, poor souls, than *Banks* his mare."

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What I have said, on the Latin Liturgy, may suffice to convince you, that the Church has solid reasons for continuing, during all times, and among all nations, her public worship in one common, pure, and unchangeable language. Surely, it will prove, that the idea of our using this language in order to keep the people in darkness, is too absurd to be entertained by a sensible mind. For, had this been the object of the Catholic Church, she would have adopted the corruptions of language; she would have enforced the barbaric dialect of the ferocious conquerors of Rome; she would have commanded the freemen of the United States to celebrate mass, not in the classic idiom of Tully, or Virgil, but, in the horrid jargon of the slaves of Totila or Alaric. Whatever remains of the beautiful writings of the ancient Romans and Greeks, must be attributed to the taste, the care, and the zeal, of the Catholic priesthood. This all will be obliged, no matter how reluctantly, to admit.

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READING THE SCRIPTURES.

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LETTER LXXXIV.

Your last very beautiful letter mentions, that you have received, as a present from Aurelia, a neat volume of the Sacred Scriptures. I rejoice at it. Let that holy book be your inseparable companion—read it over and over—meditate upon it—and pray to God to inspire your heart with the dispositions which should guide every good Christian in the perusal of the "Book of Life."

"What, then," methinks I hear a certain professor exclaim, "do you allow the Catholics to read the Bible! Is it not an article of your faith to keep it from the common eye—and to retain it only on the shelves of your libraries, in the original languages, stamped with the *imprimatur* of some grand inquisitorial authority! Sir, if you contend that all your people have a right to read the Scriptures, you go counter to the doctrine and practice of the Catholic Church!"

Notwithstanding the wonderment of that "theological professor," and all his faithful adherents, I do, in very deed, rejoice, that Aurelia has sent you a copy of the Scriptures, in the Douay translation: and most earnestly do I repeat my advice, that you study it by day and by night:

"Noctumâ versate manu, versate diurnâ."

The *use* of the Bible is encouraged by the church—

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the *abuse* of it condemned. The meditation of the life of Christ, of his sublime maxims, and his divine institutions, nourishes the mind with spiritual things, and fills the heart with religious emotions. But, to allow every reader, young and old, learned and illiterate, grave and gay, the unqualified right to derive from the sacred text whatever meaning their capricious imaginations may suggest, and to acknowledge this right, as the sole rule of Christian faith, is what the wisdom of the Church will never approve,—must ever condemn.

To show that the discreet use of the Scriptures has always been enforced, not a Sunday passes, but the clergyman reads from the pulpit a portion of them in the English language, for the edification of the people. In the mass of every day in the year, the Priest recites a part of the gospels, and epistles: and his breviary is composed of passages from the Psalms, and other books of the ancient testament, and from the different writings of the new. This breviary is distributed into various parts, adapted to every day, which, unless in case of necessity, he cannot in conscience omit. With justice, therefore, did St. Ambrose style the Bible the *Sacerdotal book.* And the Council of Trent requires that all Pastors comply with the *first of all their duties, of preaching the gospel* to the people.

It has sometimes struck me, that the Bible resembles our Constitution—indeed it may be styled the consti-

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tution of the Church. All the Judges and officers of government must be conversant with that constitution, must understand all its intricacies—must be able to expound them to the people. It is not, however, necessary, that all men should be as familar with the difficulties of the Scriptures, and the solution of them—with the genius of the times in which the Scriptures were written, and with the original languages from which the English is translated. It is enough for them to have in their families a copy—and no family should be without it—and to peruse the prophecies and the New Testament, particularly, with a spirit of faith, humility, and obedience.

Do all Americans, think you, pretend to be as competent to understand the spirit, and bearing, and precise meaning of the constitution, as the judges and lawyers of the land? Were this the case, there would be no necessity for those officers. Well, the language of that constitution is English, the vernacular tongue of the country, and written but a few years ago, within the recollection of some who are still living: and, nevertheless, it is evinced by daily experience, how little uniformity exists in the inferences, and practical results, derived from its interpretation. How infinitely more difficult must not the genuine meaning of the Scriptures, written so many centuries ago—in a quarter of the world where every thing—imagery, figures, idioms, allusions, customs, manners,—differed, *toto cælo*,

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from every thing we are accustomed to, and that cha-characterizes us as a nation.

And, yet, every individual of our age presumes to claim an undoubted *right* to interpret the sacred volume: it is an inborn, natural, inalienable prerogative of black and white, slave and master! And the church that dares to raise a salutary barrier against the torrent of abuses which rush, from this source, upon the world, is designated as an arrogant, and anti-christian combination. The Jews, by an express order from heaven, were forbidden to read certain books of the Bible, before they attained their thirtieth year. Those same books are now perused by children of thirteen! What is the consequence?

"Aristarchus of old," writes the very learned Walton in his prolegomenon to the Polyglot, "could hardly find seven wise men in Greece: but amongst us, it is difficult to find the same number of ignorant persons. They are all doctors, and divinely inspired. There is not a fanatic, or a mountebank, from the lower class of the people, who does not vent his dreams for the word of God. The bottomless pit seems to be opened, and there came out of it locusts with stings; a swarm of sectaries and heretics, who have renewed all the heresies of former ages, and added to them numerous and monstrous errors of their own." This is the language of a Protestant. I am aware that the gentle-

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man of the little chapel will not subscribe to it—but what is he compared to Walton?

Mark, in your intercourse with your friends of different denominations, how each one quotes the Scriptures, and makes them prove their respective tenets. Often the same text is made to support propositions the most contradictory—and, yet, each one clings, with the tenacity of his undisputed right, to his own notions, his own interpretation. Florentine is a Presbyterian, and quotes Scripture in defence of her creed. Laurentia is an Episcopalian, and quotes Scripture in *her* vindication. A third is a Quaker—and, with the Scriptures in her hands, rejects the necessity of baptism. A fourth is a Baptist, and proves immersion from the Bible. A fifth is a Unitarian, and relying upon her interpretation of certain texts, rejects the divinity of Christ. Is it not so? Does not your own observation test this fact—and does not this strange conflict of opinions—this manifest confusion of inferences, drawn from the same book, speak volumes to the reflecting and inquiring mind? I know what effect it will produce upon yours. Courage therefore—for courage is necessary—in your determination. But sacrifice not, for all the world might promise, the convictions which reason will approve, and heaven reward.

There have been fanatics, who, in reading the Bible, imagined they discovered, in themselves, the identification of certain extraordinary characters recorded in the

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sacred volume. The annals of history, traced by the genius of fidelity, who blushes while she writes, present numberless instances of such dupes and impostors. The Gnostics, who branched out into a variety of ramifications, in the very first age of Christianity, produced several "monsters," who blinded themselves so far, by the misapplication of Scripture, as to fancy themselves greater than the prophets, nay the "word divine:" and not one of them was without disciples—who referred to Scripture in vindication of their absurd and impious reveries.

What will not the abuse of Scripture effect! Revolutions, bloodshed, carnage, impiety, confusion, abomination—have sprung from the misconstruction of the holy book, which, properly understood, breathes nothing but union, peace, charity, love of God and man, virtue, and sublime religion.

"Lord Clarendon, Mr. Gray, Dr. Hey," writes the author of the *End of controversy*, "agree, that the misapplication of Scripture was the cause of the destruction of church and state, and of the murder of the King in the great rebellion. I am confident," he adds, "that the Bishop, (Dr. Proteus,) would have taken the Bible out of the hands of Hugh Peters, Oliver Cromwell, Lord George Gordon," &c. &c.

Certainly, Dr. —— himself, would have taken it out of the hands of Johanna Southcott, Emmanuel Swe-

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denborg, and the monstrous impostors of our own enlightened days.

The indiscriminate right of interpreting the Bible, has caused the most lamentable evils. Ward writes:

> "This brought ten thousand sects among 'em . . . .
> And raised up in all places preachers;
> Hammond and Kett set up for teachers.
> Carlisle, and Bannister, and Glover,
> Did each a different sect discover.
> So Hacket, Arthington, and Brown,
> Had different faiths, each man his own.
> And so had Harrison and Barrow
> And Snape, and Wigston, Payn and Sparrow.
> Another sect did more approve
> Of H. N.'s *family of love*."

There is much sound sense in the hudibrastic lines of Ward. He wrote to suit the taste of his age—the substance of his "Cantos" must be interesting to all times. He proves one fact, at least, that the Word of God cannot inspire hundreds of religionists with contradictions and impieties.

LETTER LXXXV.

> Give me that holy volume; I will pore
> By day, by night, most reverently o'er
> The maxims it contains—sublime, divine
> Is every word it speaks to hearts like thine,
> Which recognises—as it meditates—

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Its value, and its beauty :—it breathes forth
Union among the children of the earth,
And charity, and peace: it points to heaven,
The blissful hopes of man, by Him forgiven,
Who bled and died to ope the eternal gates
To mortals—it condemns all strife and broils—
Teaches that all for which the bad man toils
Is worse than folly, while the grief and pain
Of the good Christian shall not be in vain;
But through them life eternal he shall gain.
  Thrice blessed book when rightly understood!
Pouring upon the world a mighty flood
Of light and glory—but too oft, alas!
Misconstrued into nonsense :—every class
Of sectaries to its tribunal trace
Their various errors—to it they appeal
And make it speak the sentiments they feel.
  Oh! what is man without a power to bind
The curious reveries of his fitful mind!
But where, I ask you, can that power abide
Save in the church—by time and peril tried—
To it must reason, learning, wisdom bend:
And it will guide us to a glorious end.

Yes, there must be some tribunal established by the founder of Religion, before which the caprices of the human mind must be arraigned. There must exist some authority to which opinion must bow, reason itself must yield. Are you not convinced of this from the state of things which surrounds us? Are we not taught this by the best and wisest men, who have acted for our imitation, and written for our instruction?

It is absurd to contend, that the ignorant reader of

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the Scriptures will be enlightened, by the Divine wisdom, in such a manner, that he will require no human aid in arriving at the undoubted meaning of the most difficult texts in Scripture. The Eunuch, who was baptized by Philip thought very differently. You remember the particulars of this fact: but, read them with deep attention, and they will stand a perpetual refutation of the assumed *rights* of our modern religionists.—The interview between those two personages is recorded in the Acts, chapter the eighth, beginning at the twenty-sixth verse. The Eunuch was from Ethiopia, the treasurer of the Queen Candace, and had come to Jerusalem for the celebration of the Pasch. On his return, as he sat in his chariot, he was reading Isaias, the prophet. Philip joined him, and put the question to him: "Understandest thou what thou readest?"

And he said: "How can I understand, except some man should guide me?"

How different the reply of that wise man to Philip, from the vain imagination of the deluded bibliomanist of our day! "Understand!" would *he* indignantly exclaim, "assuredly I understand; the Holy Spirit enlightens me, the Scripture is plain; even a fool may comprehend it; no one but a Papist would insinuate that there is anything too obscure for the simplest mind in the precious book."

This—or I am much mistaken—would be the self-

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complacent ejaculation of the disciples of the gentleman of the little chapel.

But the Ethiopian Eunuch was less "wise in his own conceit." He felt, that there were difficulties in the Scriptures, which he could not solve, obscurities which he could not penetrate; and he applied to the deacon, Philip, who "opened his mouth . . . and preached unto him Jesus . . . and he baptized him."

St. Peter did not think, that all readers could understand the Epistles of St. Paul: and it will not, cannot be considered illiberal in me, or unjustifiable in our Church, to urge upon the public the texts in which the chief of the Apostles expresses the caution and prudence which should guide men in the persual of the sacred volume.

Turn to the second Epistle of Peter, third chapter, and read the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth verses. You will find the following words: . . . . "even as our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him, hath written unto you:

"As also in all his Epistles, speaking in them of these things: in which are some things *hard to understand*, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they also the *other Scriptures*, unto their own destruction.

"Ye, therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness."

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If, during the lifetime of the Apostle, his Epistles were misinterpreted by the unlearned, and were wrested by them to their destruction, have men grown wiser, and more stable, after a lapse of eighteen hundred years? Is it probable that this indiscriminate right of construing the sacred text, will not now lead into error, will not occasion destruction!

Justly, then, may I conclude with the remark I before made to you: *use*, but do not *abuse*, the Scriptures. Search them, meditate on them, let them be your daily companion, your inseparable friend. You will derive from them consolation, strength, peace, hope, charity. You will discover new motives of gratitude to God for his infinite favours, of faith in all his institutions, and hope of the eternal rewards which are promised in the life to come. Read, then, with humility; with a docile spirit; with a submissive understanding; with an upright heart. What is obscure, will be lighted up by the torch of faith; what is incomprehensible will receive the homage of reason, directed by the authority of the Church; what is enveloped in mystery will not be scrutinized by human wisdom. Reading the Scripture, with these dispositions, there will be no danger of being "led away with the error of the wicked, or falling from the steadfastness" of our holy religion. By her, they have been transmitted down to us—and she is the best interpreter of her own book. "The word of God," writes the cele-

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brated Walton, whom I quoted above, "does not consist in mere letters, but in the sense, which no one can better interpret than the true Church, to which Christ committed this sacred deposit."

You will listen to the voice of that Church—which has been heard, during all past ages, amid the uproar and confusion of nations, and the hoarse tumult of sects—and which shall continue to be heard, according to the promise of her divine Founder, until the end of time.

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INFALLIBILITY OF THE CHURCH.

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LETTER LXXXVI.

The infallibility of the Church! What, is not everything like infallibility exploded in this age! Are there to be found men, in the nineteenth century, who can bring themselves to believe, that any institution can be endowed with the prerogative of infallibility! Do Catholics still inculcate this tenet, as essential to the Church? They certainly do: and we shall enter into the reasons which guide the Catholic Religion in this respect.

The age in which we live, is, I know, the age of wisdom: one which claims the dignity of being the most enlightened of all that have preceded it. On what exclusive grounds this extraordinary claim reposes, I will leave to others the task of explaining. I will admit, that astonishing inventions have burst upon the world; that the sciences have been improved to an incredible degree; and that society has attained the utmost refinement of civilization. I will acknowledge, that many of the civil institutions of past ages have grown too cumbersome and antiquated for the present day; and justly have they been removed to make room for others adapted to the genius, and according with the character, of a regenerated people. All this may be conceded, and, if you choose, constitute the boast and glory of the nineteenth century.

But, there is one institution that cannot be reformed.

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It has known no change; can admit of no improvement; is not subject to the decrepitude of age; and no less congenial to the habits and temper of the present, than it was to those of the primitive era, of Christianity. It is not the work of man; it has not been formed by human wisdom; it is not supported by human power. It is the master-piece of God; and, like its almighty author, is unchangeable—everlasting. And this is the CHURCH. An edifice, which has fixed its foundations on the rocks of the earth, and which rears its venerable head to the firmament of heaven. It is a mighty structure, reposing on two worlds—time and eternity. It towers, sublime and solitary in its grandeur, infinitely above the loftiest works of human magnificence; sees men and their works pass away; and, while the gloom of the grave, and of oblivion, covers the trophies of the world, the glittering of a thousand shields, and the pride of a thousand trophies, irradiate and adorn the memory of its great. Infallible in its decisions, as it is immortal in its existence, it preserves unsullied the purity of faith contained in the charter delivered to the Apostles. The glorious and triumphant motto inscribed on its escutcheon: "I am with you all days to the consummation of the world," could not be verified, if the church were not supported by the principle of infallibility.

This truth is reflected from every passage in the New Testament, in which mention is made of the na-

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ture and institutions of religion. It is grounded on the unanimous authority of the ancient fathers; and it is strongly supported even by reason itself. My object, now, is to examine each point separately, and to develope the subject in all its parts, and all will be found to concur in the vindication and proof of this noble prerogative.

"Go teach all nations,"—thus the Saviour said
To his Apostles, "and behold! while time
Shall last, I shall be with you." Many an age
Has passed away, since thus he promised them—
But still the Church exists; and ne'er shall fail.

The edifice upon a rock is built,
Which, mid the storms of time and revolution,
Shall e'er remain, reposing on the word
Of its eternal author: while the hills
Of the firm earth grow old—and the hoar rocks
Of the deep ocean fail before the tempest,
It shall endure, and flourish on for ever.

LETTER LXXXVII.

Your little niece,—a lovelier child smiles not upon her mother—called out to me, last summer, as I sat in the arbour near your cousin's mansion: "I am reading the history of Rome."

"By what author?" I asked.

"Goldsmith," she returned.

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"You must be delighted with the manner in which that elegant writer narrates the events connected with the history of the Roman empire. Study it well, and endeavour to remember what you read."

"I do: but must I believe every thing which he relates?"

This was a shrewd and sensible question. I did not expect it from a child of twelve years.

"The great events," I replied, "are certain: and it would be contrary to common sense to question them. For instance, that Cæsar lived; that Cicero was consul; that Augustus was Emperor; are facts which are as true as truth itself." Maria Louisa was satisfied, and continued her reading.

The question of your niece was not without its philosophy, and has a powerful bearing upon religion itself. Men are infallibly certain, I thought, of the existence of Cæsar. That fact depends upon human testimony: that testimony, though each individual be fallible, cannot deceive me—consequently there exists, among men, an infallible authority. If this is the case in an historic fact, I argued—if philosophers never questioned it—why is it, that so much is said, written, and urged, against the infallibility of the church!

The church is the depository of the truth. To her keeping have been committed, by the Redeemer, the articles of faith which all her children are bound to believe. She cannot explode any, she cannot form new

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ones. She can only bear testimony, from age to age, of the truths which have been delivered to her care: she can merely testify, with infallible certainty, to the nineteenth century, what was the faith of the first: and, if our dissenting friends receive, on the mere authority of historians, the great facts related by them—if it would argue folly to controvert them—what difficulty can there be in attaching to the authority of the church, at least an equal claim to credibility, which they acknowledge in the unanimous assent of historians.

This view of the subject would, of itself, be sufficient, it seems to me, to silence the clamor which has been raised against us: but let us examine the Scriptures; let us see whether we can discover in them any proof in vindication of the tenet of the infallibility of the Church. Has Laurentia ever considered this subject in its proper light?

LETTER LXXXVIII.

"The church infallible! ah me!
Strange error this of popery:
To dare assume an attribute
Of the Omnipotent:"
Thus does Mirandula refute,
By exclamation—not dispute—
All argument.
Poor papists! how deluded are we grown!
To admit no form of worship but our own!

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Mirandula should pause awhile, until we investigate the Scriptures on this subject: let us do so calmly and seriously, in this letter.

The most striking argument in support of this doctrine is derived from the 28th chapter of St. Matthew, 19th and 20th verses: "Go ye, therefore," (Protestant version) "and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

Upon which I argue thus: If Jesus, the divine founder of the Church, the God of truth, makes so clear and solemn a promise, that he will be with his Church *always*, it is manifest that he will fulfil his promise: and if he remains with his Church *always*, it is equally manifest that she must always be free from error. For, he being the Father of truth, could not abide with error. But he evidently made the promise, in the words above quoted: consequently the Church cannot fall into error—in other words, is infallible.

It is a remark not less trite than cogent, that as the apostles were to live no longer than the period allotted to human existence, the palladium of truth, which was entrusted to them, must necessarily have been transmitted, as they received it, to their successors; with whom the spirit of truth must have abode, and shall continue to abide for ever. But that spirit of truth is

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infallible—consequently the successors of the apostles must always enjoy the prerogative of infallibility.

In the gospel of St. Matthew, chapter the sixteenth, verse eighteenth, Christ declared that "the gates of hell should not prevail against his Church." He laid its foundation upon a rock, against which the rapid tide of time can make no impression, and the storms of revolution and change waste themselves away.

I contend, that if the Church could err—were not infallible, in matters of faith—the gates of hell would have prevailed against her. For, a more signal triumph could not be effected over the holy institutions of the Church, than that of involving them in error; extinguishing the torch of truth, which Christ had kindled—like the luminous pillar that burned over the followers of Moses—to trace our path through the dark and intricate labyrinth of life, to the land of light and glory.

We have been commanded to hear the Church: "He who will not hear the Church, let him be as a heathen and a publican." MATTHEW xviii. 17.

Now, what would be our fate, if we were commanded, under so grievous a penalty, to hear the decisions of a Church which might possibly deceive us; which might, at any time, or under any circumstances, teach a doctrine not conformable to that which was imparted to his disciples by the founder of the Church; which, in a word, might lead me into error? Could God, the author of all truth and holiness, bid me be subject to a

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command, the very submission to which would render me liable to be misguided? If such were the case, what would become of the justice, the goodness, the providence of the Almighty? What peace could we enjoy? Or rather, to what anxiety and misery should we not be devoted!

Yet, he has given the positive and unambiguous command: "He that will not hear the Church, let him be as a heathen and a publican." To every candid and reflecting mind, it must, therefore, be manifest, that the Church which we are commanded to hear, must be secured against everything like error, or the shadow of error—and that, not only during its primitive existence, but to the end of time.

St. Paul, in his first epistle to Timothy, his beloved disciple, reminds him in strong terms, that the Church "is the pillar and ground of truth."—*verse* 15. Upon this the fabric of Christianity is established: reposing on a rock, it rears to heaven its pillar. Clouds may collect about it—the waters may foam at its base—the earth may shake beneath it—but it shall never fail.

The Redeemer, in the discourse made to his apostles, upon his way to the garden of olives—on that most solemn and tragic occasion, when, for the last time, he was about to visit the place, in which he was wont to retire and pray—did not forget the promise he had made them. Their welfare seemed to engross his mind; they seemed to absorb all his attention, while, careless of his

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own person, he was going to meet his executioners. He then declared, that, although he was soon to be no longer among them, he would not leave them orphans —he would not entirely abandon them: on the contrary, he would send them the holy paraclete the Comforter, who should remain with them for ever.

"I will ask my Father," did he say, "who will send you another paraclete who will be with you for ever." —John 14, verses 16, 17.

The paraclete, promised to the apostles, is the spirit of truth, and that spirit is to abide with them for ever. Consequently it must, always and for ever, teach that doctrine and those principles which are conformable to truth.

Remark well, it is not said, he shall teach you as long as you live—but the glorious prerogative is to continue to the end of time—even to the consummation of the world. Every reasoning mind must acknowledge, therefore, either that Christ has not continued faithful to his promise, which it were blasphemy to assert—or that the holy paraclete still abides with the Church; still watches over the councils of the church, still inspires them with truth and infallibility.

With such a pilot at the helm, the ancient bark of Peter cannot but pursue her majestic way across the ocean of time; steady, amid the storms which rage around her, and triumphant amid the wrecks which strew the waves she cleaves: conveying the family of

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true believers—like the remnants of men in Noah's ark—to the mountain of salvation. May we be found among those favoured ones! Oh, I am sure you will not be missing from the number of the sincere, the persevering, and the good.

LETTER LXXXIX.

"Scripture! Scripture!" is the loud exclamation of the day. "We will believe nothing which does not emanate from that inspired book. Chapter and verse we require, we demand." The demand has been complied with. Not a tenet have I adduced, but has been proved from the Bible: I have, throughout, appealed to its authority. And, if you review the letters which I have addressed to you, it will be evident that the most fastidious must be satisfied with my constant recurrence to the Bible—and generally, too, to the Protestant translation.

With regard to the doctrine of infallibility, you must be convinced, that it is clearly, I might almost say, incontrovertibly, proved from that holy volume. Many other texts might be quoted—but sufficient, it appears to me, have been laid before you to exhibit the solid grounds on which that tenet—so violently assailed by our opponents—is established. Is not the minister of the little temple *infallibly* certain that the Scriptures

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are the word of God? And does not the medium, through which he arrives at the certainty, depend upon the testimony of men? He will not say that the Bible can prove its own infallibility. This is a serious matter of consideration for "Professors," "essayists," and certain "Doctors."

Upon these grounds, then, might we stand,
In triumph, true and fair;
Such arguments rest not on sand—
But on a rock—and here,
Without advancing further on,
We might be satisfied to pause:
And in a deep and solemn tone
We might exclaim: "Here rests our cause!"

But, to exhibit the subject more satisfactorily, and copiously, I will appeal to a few of the most ancient, as well as the most famous, of the fathers. We will see, from a candid examination of their works, whether they speak of, believe, and defend, this doctrine, as founded on the promises of Christ himself, and essential to the very existence of the church, of which he was the author.

If the Fathers of the earliest times can be arrayed on the side of the Catholic religion in this particular, who can resist the united authority of Scripture and tradition?

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LETTER XC.

In concluding my last letter, I mentioned the word tradition—and, before citing the fathers in defence of the infallibility of the Church, it may not be useless to make some remarks on this word. There are few among our separated friends, who place any confidence, whatever, in tradition—there are many who ridicule it as absurd. This was not, however, the case with the illustrious man who had most to do in drawing up the thirty-nine articles: I mean Bishop Jewell. He continually rests upon tradition, upon the fathers of the primitive Church, in the apology which he published in 1562, with the unqualified applause of all the Protestant societies in Europe.

The modern assailants of tradition widely differ from Lord Somers, who in his *tradition*, page 341, vol. viii., writes thus:

"I am not of those who admire the great knowledge in divine matters, revealed in the latter age of the world. I do not think that there are any now so likely to discover the truth of gospel mysteries as those of ancient days. As for that saying: A pigmy set on a giant's shoulder may see more than the giant; pardon me if I call it a shallow and silly fancy, nothing to our purpose. For, our question is not of seeing more, but of the close discerning and judging those things we all see; but are in doubt what they mean. If a pigmy

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and a giant see a beast at a mile distant, and are in dispute whether it be a horse or an ox, the pigmy set on the giant's shoulder is never the nearer discerning what it is, which depends on the sharpest sight, not on the height of his shoulders. Now that the ancient fathers of the Church were more spiritual, and consequently sharper sighted in spiritual things, than we carnal creatures of this latter age, is evident by their spiritual, holy lives. The natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned. (1 Cor. 11, 14.) . . . . . .

"Wherefore," he concludes, "I shall always hearken, with due reverence, unto what those primitive fathers deliver, and the more holy and more ancient, doubtless more to be regarded."

I recommend this extract, to the pastor of the Church to which Laurentia belongs. It might be of use to the pupils of the "Professor in a theological seminary."

Beveridge, the bishop of St. Asaph's, in his Latin preface to the collection of canons of the primitive Church, writes as follows:

"In objects of doctrine and discipline, if we would neither sin nor transgress, let us beware above all things of adhering obstinately to our conceptions and conjectures, or to those of others. Let us rather examine what has been the opinion of the universal Church, or at least of the major part of Christians; and let us at-

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tach ourselves to the opinion that has been adopted by the Christians of all ages. For, as in the entire consent of all consists the voice of nature, says Cicero, so in disputed points the consent of all Christians should be held as the voice of the gospel. There are many articles which are not read, in express terms in the Scripture, and which, nevertheless, are deduced from it by the universal assent of Christians. For example, the holy trinity . . . . . And again that the infant should be washed in the holy water of baptism . . . . . These articles, and others, besides, are no where expressly commanded in holy writ; and, nevertheless, for these fifteen hundred years, they have been followed in the public service of the Church: they are, as it were, actions common to all, planted from the beginning, in the hearts of Christians . . . derived *from the tradition of the apostles*, who, together with the faith, propagated in the world these ecclesiastical rites, and if I may term them so, these general interpretations of the gospel: otherwise it would be incredible, and even impossible that they should have obtained so unanimous a reception in all places, in all times, and among all Christians."

Are these the only names among the Protestants, think you, in favour of tradition? By no means: there might be ranged, by their side, those of Thorndyke, Collier, Bull, Samuel Parker, Bramhall, Dodwell, Waterland, Archbishops Tillotson and Wake: Bishops

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Bilson, Montague, Andrews, Potter, Collins, Hall, Over al, Peploe, Patrick, and Forbes; the Hon. M. Campbell, and Sir Edward Denny; Doctors Field, Hammond, Sherlock, Leslie, Cave, Chillingworth. Grabe, Bisse, Reeve, Knight, Hicks, Laurence, Wall, Brett; and Messrs. Bingham, Johnson, Griffith, and Daillè.

Passages from all of these writings are cited by Wix, in his work entitled "Reflections," &c., from page 40, to page 78, second London edition, 1752.

What a galaxy of lights, shining in the Protestant firmament, and shedding lustre upon Catholic doctrines! What learning and candour displayed among the greatest of the great! And are Catholics—am I—to be reputed among the duped and ignoble, for believing in tradition, when that tenet is defended, illustrated by such a magnanimous host of Protestant writers! Has the "Professor," ever heard all the names I have cited? If bishop Forbes is unknown to modern writers—modern controversialists—modern divines—can I hope that the others are, at all, familiar with them? Still, their works remain: to them we direct the critical attention of all well disposed persons. What a consolation for us to find, that one of our characteristic doctrines—that of tradition—is so generally admitted by the best Protestants authors. I recommend those who, in our times laugh at us, to study the works of their own grave authors.

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LETTER XCI.

They are gone, our dear and amiable friends! The noble ship has spread her sails, like a majestic sea-fowl, to the fair, fresh winds—and we have committed them to her care—entrusted them to her guidance, on the deep and distant ocean. I could not but exclaim, as I bade them a long farewell—in the words of Horace:

> O navis, referent in mare te novi
> Fluctus—O quid agis! fortiter occupa
> Portum ———.

Which you will allow me to paraphrase thus:

> Go forth, thou gallant bark,
> Speed safely, quickly o'er
> The waters wild and dark,
> To Europe's distant shore.

Having retired to my study, after accompanying them to the mouth of the ocean, I found my books open upon my desk, and my paper waiting, as it were, for my return, and prepared for another letter to you. I continue my task—if a correspondence of this kind should be considered a task—with increased satisfaction: and I resume the subject of the Infallibility of the Church.

Having proved this doctrine from the Scriptures, I shall now cite a few but explicit passages from the holy Fathers, corroborating the same. Origen, in his

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first homily on the book of Genesis, says: "the Church of the living God is FORTIFIED with the TRUTH of doctrine.

St. Cyril of Jerusalem bids us "adhere to the Catholic Church." St. Epiphanius styles the Church "a royal way—the path of truth." St. Chrysostom testifies "that nothing is more powerful than the Church. O man!" he exclaims, "do not wage war against heaven: if you oppose the Church, you cannot conquer!"

St. Cyprian, in his sixty-sixth Epistle assures us, "that the multitude may recede from Christ, the CHURCH NEVER CAN."

"The Catholic Church," observes Lactantius, in his fourth book of divine institutions, "is that which retains the TRUE RELIGION. It is the fountain of TRUTH, and the ABODE OF FAITH."

St. Hilary calls the Church "the Mouth of Christ."

St. Augustine remarks that the Church is holy, one, TRUE; combatting against all heresies: she may be warred against, but never can be overcome. The powers of hell cannot vanquish her.

"The Church has perished! thus they speak," writes St. Augustine, "in refuting the Donatists, who were separated from her, this language is abominable, detestable, vain," &c.—*On the Ps.* 101.

"You quote the Scriptures," Tertullian thus addressed the Marcionites, "but you forget that the Scriptures themselves come down to us through that

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perpetual instruction of pastors, which you have deserted. The gospels, the apostolic Epistles, and the other parts of the Scriptures have not formed the Church: they have been directed to the Church, which already existed, and were received by them *on account of the testimony of the Church.*"

To this Church, extraordinary as it may seem, the primitive Protestants professed to adhere. The confession of Augsburgh and the Apology declare, that they do not despise the authority of the ancient Church: and even go so far as to appeal to it.—(Article 21.)

Calvin and Beza had recourse to the same authority, against the Arians. "Oh! Athanasius!" exclaims the latter in his book *on the punishment of heretics*, "thou who didst, on account of this subject, traverse almost the whole world, for what reason didst thou compose and construct that admirable creed, with so much brevity?" &c.

And this is a creed to which modern Protestants are not very willing to subscribe; especially the concluding part of it. As for you, I feel assured, that there will exist in your mind no difficulty whatever to repeat it, and to adhere to it, with, at least, as much respect as Beza.

From all these testimonies, we infer
That from our founder we cannot recede:
But could our holy Church be doomed to err,
Against her would the powers of hell succeed.

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She is the "mouth of Christ," and who
Would dare assert that Christ, the word divine,
Could utter aught that is not true?
No, she must teach all TRUTH—that Church is mine!

Might I not say *thine?* For, I feel assured the time is not distant when thou wilt acknowledge thyself a dutiful child of our holy mother, the Roman Catholic Church. I am not rash in making the assertion?

LETTER XCII.

Reason, itself, teaches us, that the Church, from the nature of her establishment, must be the depository of truth. That Church is established on the plan of a government, of which the Scripture is the code of laws; but there never did, there never could, exist a government without laws: and these laws are not always couched in terms that cannot be misunderstood. They are often obscure, and, by no means, intelligible to every individual. They are submitted, for their interpretation, to a tribunal which exists in every well-organized society, otherwise that society or government would soon be thrown into confusion, and would necessarily tend to destruction,

Now, could the wisdom of the Redeemer be less than that of the worldly legislator? Could he have provided, with less precaution, for the welfare and perpetuity

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of his institutions, than man has done for his own! No; there must be a tribunal to judge, and to decide: and its judgment and decision must be infallible: otherwise, the Church would be liable to fall into error, which is contrary to the promises of Christ.

During his earthly sojourn with the children of men, the Redeemer felt and evinced an intense interest for the peace and harmony of society. In all his exhortations, he breathed the spirit of peace. "My peace I leave unto you—my peace I give unto you."

Thoroughly acquainted with the human heart, he knew, that where there would be litigations and contentions, peace, that purest link by which all the charities of life are connected, would be broken. Can it be thought, that he did not leave the means by which that peace should be perpetuated; by which the tumult of controversy might be hushed, and the caprices of the human mind effectually checked? Were there no tribunal to decide, the consequences would be woful: the divine inheritance would be laid waste, and the gates of hell would prevail against it. Certainty would evaporate into doubt. Faith would be subjected to the conceits of the mind; and opinion would dominate, where testimony should reign.

From our daily experience we are convinced, that nothing can be more obscure than the language and phraseology peculiar to the Scriptures. We cannot, of ourselves, decide their proper meaning. We find consequen-

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ces the most contradictory deduced, by different interpretations, from the very same texts. Take a survey of the infinite variety of sects which now exist: examine how they contradict one another; yet found their contradictions on the same book, and, frequently, on the same texts, and you must feel the absolute necessity of some established AUTHORITY which will direct the "unlearned," and support the "unstable;" which will prevent both from "interpreting the Scriptures to their own destruction."

"Such is the depth of the Scriptures," observes the venerable Vincent of Lerins, "that all do not understand them; it, therefore, becomes necessary that the meaning of our interpretation should be directed by the rule of the Catholic Church."

This rule must be infallible; otherwise, it would be insufficient: and we should still be liable to be "tossed about by the winds of every doctrine."

The Scriptures, then, prove the necessity of an infallible Church. The fathers, of all ages, acknowledged and supported its authority. Reason evinces the necessity of it; who will deny it? Not you, who are inspired by sincerity and TRUTH: you will rejoice to repose under the protection of that Church; trusting in the promises of her author, and looking forward to the rewards which are prepared on high for the "good and faithful."

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What solace for the children of the Church!
'Tis theirs to drink, e'en at the fountain's source,
Of those pure waters which leap into life.
Like John who leaned upon his master's breast,
In peace and confidence, they may repose;
Secure in truth, infallible in faith;
While others on the devious billows thrown
Of mere opinion—are for ever tost
In strange confusion by the winds of error,
Ours is the glorious happiness to dwell
In Sion's blest and holy tabernacles:
We can exclaim; "Sweet, Israel, are thy tents,
Thy tabernacles beautiful, O Lord!"

Yes, our hearts should expand with gratitude towards him, who has chosen us as his followers; adopted us as his children. Our lives should reflect the purity of our faith; our conduct should be a practical comment on the prerogatives of our Church. Oh! let us cling to her unity; submit to her authority; be obedient to her laws; bow to her decisions; be actuated by her spirit; be nourished with her sacraments; and die with her consolations.

My letters to you on the subject of religion, are brought to a close. Most pleasing to me was the duty of unfolding to you the doctrines of truth: and oh! may it be as useful to you as I was induced to anticipate!

And when your heart, in the fulness of its devotion, pours forth its prayers to heaven, let it breathe its tenderest gratitude to the "giver of every good gift," for

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having afforded you this favourable opportunity of becoming acquainted with that Church, which has been founded, and continues to exist, on the everlasting basis of TRUTH.

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CONCLUSION.

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LETTER XCIII.

I cannot express to you the sentiments of profound satisfaction I experience, at the result of this correspondence. A result, however, which, I must avow, was not unanticipated. You have acknowledged yourself convinced of the truth of the Catholic religion. You state, in your beautiful letter, that, although tinctured, by education, with a certain degree of prejudice, not so much against our Church, as in favour of your own, still, you were not among those insincere persons, whose minds are closed against instruction, and whose hearts are impervious to the touching inspirations of true Faith. Your eyes were not shut to the light of the ancient doctrines, which I have been instrumental in spreading before you, in this explanation and vindication of the tenets of our holy Church.

You have seen what was the faith of the Christian world before the epoch of the mis-named Reformation. "Which," writes the learned and judicious Macauly, "was by no means favourable to political liberty. If the system, on which the founders of the Church of England had acted, could have been permanent, the Reformation would have been, in a political sense," (and I will add religious) "the greatest curse that ever fell on our country. It was possible to transfer the name of the head of the Church from Clement to Henry; but it was impossible to transfer to the new

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establishment the veneration which the old establishment had acquired. The supremacy of the bishop of Rome had been *for ages* considered as a fundamental principle of Christianity; it had for it every thing that could make a prejudice deep and strong.... Rome had at least prescription on its side. But Protestant intolerance, despotism, *in an upstart sect*, infallibility claimed by guides who acknowledged that they had passed half their lives in error, restraint imposed on the liberty of private judgment by rulers, who could vindicate their own proceedings only by asserting the liberty of private judgment—these things could not long be borne. Those who had pulled down the Crucifix could not long continue to persecute for the surplice. It required no great sagacity to perceive the inconsistency and dishonesty of men, who, *dissenting from almost all Christendom*, would suffer none to dissent from themselves; who demanded freedom of conscience, and yet refused to grant it, who execrated persecution, yet persecuted.... Thus the system on which the English princes acted, with respect to ecclesiastical affairs, for some time after the Reformation, was too obviously unreasonable, to be lasting."—MACAULY'S ESSAYS, (*Lord Nugent's Memorials of Hampden*, pp. 153, 154.) Philadelphia Edition.

From this extract, taken out of the much-admired writings of a Protestant critic, you may form a correct idea of the change introduced into religion, by the

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passions of Demagogues. The Reformation begins to appear in its true and proper light, after the lapse of three centuries. The excitement has had time to wax cool: and reason and judgment are free, again, to assert their privileges and assume their rights. That light—like the star which guided the wise men of the East to the cradle of the Man-God—will conduct thousands, as it has led yourself, to the sanctuary of Truth. Its first beams have broken—strange to say—with their earliest illuminations, on the antique and venerable turrets of Oxford. There they glow on, and seem gradually to expand and diffuse themselves through all the anxious spirits and perplexed hearts, that dwell within those walls. That heaven-enkindled light traces out the way wherein the wanderers from their mother's arms may return to her. It points, with a steady, and unquenchable ray, to the centre of Unity and Faith—ROME! for which there is a yearning, that will not easily be quelled—for it is the yearning after happiness and peace.

You have found both. In the bosom of the Church, you have made your rest, and there will you abide. Happy, thrice happy your destiny! You have returned to the religion of all our ancestors. With them, you take your place among the holy, the venerable, and the wise. You abjure nothing: but merely add to the deficiencies which Protestantism has occasioned: the dogmas, believed by the whole Christian world, from

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immemorial ages, which I have explained and vindicated, you assume : and, on the foundation of what are styled *essentials*, you erect the superstructure of those tenets which, you are convinced, are as essential as the foundation itself. Because both are the work of Christ—both depend on his word, are based on his divinity ; and one, of consequence, is, in every respect, as important as the other.

Be thankful, then, for the gracious favour you have received. Chosen from among so many, taken from the side of Laurentia, Florentine, and from your own affectionate family, language has not words with which to express the infinite gratitude of your heart. Yet, you will not cease to love them all. For, the Catholic Church commands her children to love their friends, with intense affection, no matter what creed they may profess. She teaches them, at the same time—and you will fervently obey her commands—to pray, in the sincerity of your fervour and devotion, for their happiness, present and future. May your path through life be free from the thorns of sorrow and adversity. May Faith, with her torch lighted in eternity, throw a halo of joy as well as conviction, over your mind and heart. May Perseverance walk with you to the end of your earthly pilgrimage ; and may TRUTH wreathe on your brow, in the glorious skies, the crown of immortal bliss, which has been prepared for us from " the beginning of the world."

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